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Normal evangelism

Normal Evangelism

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✓ By
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Pastor-Evangelist

Ἔργον ποιήσον εὐαγγελιστοῦ—2 *Tim. iv. 5*

Introduction by
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To
JOHN PRIEST GREENE, D. D., LL. D.
President William Jewell College,
with love and esteem

Introduction

I APPRECIATE the privilege of saying a brief word introductory to the sane and timely treatise on "Normal Evangelism" written by my good friend, Rev. O. O. Green, the beloved and efficient pastor of the Baptist Church of Versailles, Kentucky.

The theme is well chosen and the author has presented his thoughts in a clear, simple, pointed and practical manner. He has had a variety of experiences in several successful pastorates, country, village and city, and has made good use of his eyes, his head, his heart and his voice. He is therefore now competent to use his pen, which he does in a fraternal, courageous and helpful fashion.

The book is worthy of an extensive circulation, and a careful perusal will prove a blessing to parents, teachers, pastors and evangelists. I am personally aware of the fact that the author has practiced, with notable success, what he recommends to others for their serious consideration.

The days of evangelism of the Scriptural and normal type should never pass away for even a brief season. True revivals of religion will always be needed to awaken the slumbering con-

sciences of men to a vivid realization of spiritual truth and duty. To-day there is a strong current of opposition to revivals. This stream is fed by the tides of thought issuing from the theory of salvation by education—Christianity by development. We should indeed recognize the changed conditions in family, school and state. But we should also keep in mind the *unchanged fact* that all have sinned and therefore need a personal Saviour. As there are certain physical constants in natural science, so there are spiritual constants in the religious sphere—God, man, truth, salvation. God is love and Christ, His Son, the only Saviour; the Holy Spirit the sole regenerator; man is a sinner, as of old, only more refined and varied in his iniquity; truth, the revealed and only saving message of life is found in the Gospel, which was and is and ever more shall be the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; salvation is a personal act of God in delivering the believing soul from sin and death on the meritorious ground of the vicarious work of Christ, and through the medium of intelligent faith.

The wisest teaching from infancy, or from three generations past to counteract heredity, is impotent to save except as it inclines the heart and persuades the will to turn from sin to Christ. It should never be forgotten that Christianity is primarily a matter between the soul and its Lord

—it is a transaction between persons, the one a sinner, the other the sinless One, Jesus, the Christ. After life, after the transaction, comes growth, progress. Salvation as an event prepares for Christianity as a life. “He that hath the Son hath life: he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.” This declaration shows that the difference between the person who has Christ by faith—the only vital way to possess Him—and the one who has Him not, because he believes not, is the difference between life and death. The one has life and is therefore spiritually alive: the other has not life and is consequently spiritually dead. When the Christ-life becomes the life of the individual by personal faith, then the motto for the future should be—“For me to live is Christ.” It is the nature of life to manifest itself—it is demonstrative, communicative, self-evidencing. The natural vital impulse of the saved soul is to bring others to the Saviour it has found. This is the psychology of evangelism. A helpful experience seeks reproduction in other lives. It wishes to propagate itself. The language of every converted soul to the lost is this—“I would to God that you were altogether such as I am, except my limitations and imperfections.” The very nature of the new creature in Christ Jesus is missionary. The great commission is but an authoritative deliverance which the soul of the believer is ready most heartily to accept as

being the only task in harmony with his own spiritual experience, the mediatorial work of Christ and the deepest needs of the world. It is in the new spiritual transformation of the life of the saved that we find the true motive of evangelism by the Church as the body of Christ rather than by a select group of men officially appointed. Soul-winning, therefore, must ever be the supreme work of the entire body of the redeemed, individually and organically. The spirit of the individual believer and that of the Church as the body of Christ must be evangelistic, or else fail to reproduce the mind of Christ and fulfill His redemptive purpose. So then, evangelism is not an exclusively ministerial function. Essentially it is founded upon the love of God—authoritatively upon the command of Christ—and psychologically upon the experience of the believer. The number of divinely appointed evangelists is coextensive with the multitude of the redeemed. The twofold purpose of living after we are saved is to save others and to grow in Christian character.

Silent evangelism may be more potent than even vocal evangelism. The influence of every Christian should be Christ-ward. Our little lives, if they have any spiritual power at all, are magnetized by Him, who is drawing the world unto Himself. As our attractive power is derived from Him it should always be exerted in drawing

men to Him. Evangelism is not synonymous with public appeal—a private word—a longing look—a Christian hand-grasp—an affectionate note—a faithful life, may win to Christ, when the eloquent address seems but a sounding brass, or a clanging cymbal. The little soul-touching and soul-winning ministries within the reach of the humblest child of God may give life a royalty and richness that show it is indeed a heavenly gift. By virtue of the salvation experienced, life prolonged, the promises given, the father, mother, brother, sister, neighbour, friend and teacher, as well as pastor and professional evangelist, belong to the company of soul-winners which angels would delight to join. Therefore, from the quiet of the fireside, the spiritual atmosphere of a Sunday-school, the tender memories of the prayer-meeting, the earnest invitation of the regular service, let us expect lost ones to come forth in simple faith and obedient spirit to take up their cross daily and follow Jesus.

The best Christian teaching in home and Sunday-school is both an agency of direct and effective evangelism and preparation for a profound and wide-spread religious revival characterized by great sanity and spiritual power. The era of evangelism upon which we have entered emphasizes individual work for individuals—each Christian is expected to win a sinner and send him forth to lead some one else to Christ, while

he, himself, persists in the glorious work. Thus the company of the redeemed, winning men one by one, accelerates the missionary movement until we are drawing near the brightening day when every lost soul, at home and abroad, on land and on sea, shall have the privilege of hearing and heeding the Master's call.

Never was there such an opportunity for the average church-member, never such for the ordinary preacher, and never such for the minister of ten talents. These are epochal times. Ours are days of destiny. It is a great privilege to be living in the twentieth century; especially so if we are truly alive to the magnitude of our task and the magnificence of our opportunity. Obligation is the moral side of opportunity. Let the Church respond to the call to evangelism, which is as high as heaven, as deep as sin and as broad as humanity. The greatest need of the day is for each man to do his best in coöperation with all the rest.

When the Church becomes the evangelizing power it ought to be, what kind of a revival may we expect? Not an exact duplicate of any in the past in its external, physical demonstrations, and psychological phenomena, but one transcending everything in Christian history, in its heavenly serenity, in its moral depth, and in its spiritual fruitage.

It would be best to eliminate the abnor-

malities, pathological manifestations of some of the more striking revivals of the past few centuries; but it would be worse than unfortunate for the process to be carried so far as to destroy the revival itself. It is unwise to cure a disease by killing the patient. Revivals are of divine origin and when conducted in the spirit of wisdom, as well as of fervour, when the zeal displayed is tempered with knowledge, they will continue to receive heaven's approval until a prodigal world is brought back to the Father's house. God give us a perennial revival in all of our churches—country, village, city; home and foreign, with frequent and special seasons of refreshing from the presence of the Lord.

Believing that this result will be hastened by the admirable volume herein presented, I, therefore, commend "Normal Evangelism" to the thoughtful and prayerful consideration of all who desire to be wise in winning souls and hope to shine as lights in this world and as suns in the kingdom of their Father.

BYRON H. DEMENT.

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Louisville, Ky.*

Preface

SOME five years ago I was asked to prepare and read a paper before the State Baptist Ministers' Meeting of Kentucky on the theme: "The Pastor His Own Evangelist." The paper, however, was not read because of the writer's inability to attend the meeting. While writing on the theme given me I became thoroughly absorbed in it chiefly because I had already become interested in the practical side of the question. At that time I was convinced that there was material in the subject for a small volume, and entertained vague thoughts that some day—if the Lord would enable me to do so—I would write that volume; but not until one year ago did I summon courage to set myself to the task.

The original paper was read before the St. Louis Baptist Ministers' Conference, and the Blue Grass Baptist Ministers' Association, Lexington, Ky. The interest manifested in the theme by the brethren of these two bodies stimulated me to attempt the elaboration of the original paper into a book. Another cause was the growing conviction that Christian people generally, including ministers, are not deeply interested in

evangelism. While there is a wide-spread interest in evangelism, much of it is what may be termed a sympathetic interest: we like to hear about evangelistic work being done: we enjoy seeing it done: we rejoice in having it done for us: but when it comes to doing the work ourselves we are sadly lacking. Hence there has arisen a sort of proxy evangelism which pastors and churches have resorted to as a palliative for their own consciences; it is a kind of half-hearted evangelism which says: "Now we believe in evangelism and it must be done but we will just get some one else to do it for us." When pastors and churches are aroused to a sense of their obligation to engage with their whole hearts in the actual work of saving the lost, then indeed will there be upon us such a day of personal evangelism as has never before been witnessed, but which we may hope to witness before the return of our Lord to earth. As an aid towards this end the present volume on "Normal Evangelism" is now sent forth.

THE AUTHOR.

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The New Era of Evangelism

We are at the dawning of the day of personal evangelism, and every one is called of God.—*Cortland Myers.*

Of this I am sure: unless every sign be false, there is a great wave of evangelical revival about to sweep over the Churches of America.—*W. J. Dawson.*

I believe with all my heart that in the Southland—yes, in the North and West—we are in the day-dawn of the greatest revival the States have ever known.—*W. W. Hamilton.*

The evangel is always fresh as the break of day, and yet as old as the continuity of daybreak through the ages. We ought to be so living that when God begins His great triumphant march, we shall fall in with the first battalion, and have a part in the first victories.—*G. Campbell Morgan.*

There is every indication of the coming of a mighty and wide-spread revival. There is every reason why, if a revival should come in any country at this time, it should be more wide-spread in its extent than any revival of history. There is the closest and swiftest communication by travel, by letter, and by cable between all points of the world. A true fire of God kindled in America would soon spread to the uttermost parts of the earth. The only thing needed to bring this fire is prayer.

—*R. A. Torrey.*

We talk of the coming revival. What we want to do is to fall in line with the great movement of God in all the ages, and the revival is here. The revival will be along the line of the old-time doctrine of conviction of sin. One reason why there are not more conversions is because the work does not start with the Holy Spirit in the heart of the sinner, convicting him of sin. When you have the Holy Spirit settling down upon the hearts of sinners locking them up, as it were, in their sin, until they cry: "Open the door, and let me escape from the body of this death!"—then you will have a revival.

—*Len G. Broughton.*

I

THE NEW ERA OF EVANGELISM

“Ye know how to discern the face of the heaven; but ye cannot discern the signs of the times.”—*Matt. xvi. 3.*

THE history of Christianity is largely a record of the rise and decline of the interest of Christian people in spiritual things. The period of decline is always marked by peculiar forms of sin and error; while the revival period immediately following has always been characterized by prominence of certain Scriptural doctrines which were intended by the religious leaders of that time to combat those particular sins and errors. Hence it is that no two revival periods have been just alike. “There have been three evangelistic movements,” says Dr. W. W. Hamilton, “in the United States in two hundred years. First, in the time of Jonathan Edwards, accenting the new birth; second, in the time of Finney, accenting practical Christianity; third, accenting prayer, which came in the Fulton Street Noon Mission in New York. Now we are closing a special campaign on the presence and power of the Holy Spirit brought on by the period of organization, upon which we

were tempted to lean. To-day we are entering upon a new phase, the responsibility of the individual Christian to win the lost."

That we are at this time entering upon a new era of evangelistic activity is quite evident for many reasons. There is striking unanimity of thought—almost of expression—in the utterances of men who are prominent in evangelistic labours as to the belief that we are soon to witness the coming of a great revival. That such a belief is immanent in the minds of many may be seen from the foregoing quotations. These are noteworthy because of the fact that they come from men of different religious faiths, from men who live in different parts of the country—of the world—and on different occasions, yet all these convictions have been expressed within recent years. Such agreement, among such religious leaders, regarding such a movement, at such a time as this is not without significance.

"Watchman, what of the morning?" Are we at the dawn of a great world-movement in the direction of world-redemption? If so, what are to be the characteristics of the new era of evangelism? There are many who regard any attempt to forecast the lines of any movement as utterly futile. Perhaps so; but we ought to be able to see what is already here. Because the religious leaders of the time were unable to interpret the nature and character of the Messianic reign the

Christ reproached them: "Ye know how to discern the face of the heaven; but ye cannot discern the signs of the times." We ought to be on the alert to discern the tendencies of our own age; quick to detect its errors; and ever ready to seize and use whatever is for the advancement of the kingdom of God. The thoughts herein presented are not intended to be a prophecy of things to come but rather a study of conditions already existing, that we may be fully ready to follow the leadings of the Holy Spirit.

We are coming to a *more practical view of the working of the Holy Spirit*. There has been a great deal of mysticism in the age just passing. This no doubt was the result of a reaction against the materialistic tendencies of the times. We heard a great deal about "anointing," the "second blessing," and other expressions indicative of certain experiences which certain brethren had and which they insisted every one else should have before he could be fitted for service. We are coming to see that he who yields himself up to the will of Christ and follows the line of duty as closely as possible is as much guided by the Spirit as the one who has seen a vision, or heard a voice, or experienced some ecstasy of religious joy. We are coming to realize that spiritual power is not handed out to us in great quantities all at once but is supplied at the time needed. The words of Dr.

W. J. Williamson are timely when he says: "We cannot know power apart from its use. The Scriptures make no appeal for service on the basis of ecstatic joy, and no religious experience is normal which does not relate itself to man. Multitudes of honest souls have been waiting for years for a consecration which would enable them to render a beautiful and distinctive service, but consecration is ever the human side of the new life. Ecstatic emotions do not constitute power. The engine may or may not send forth jets of hissing steam, but the force that moves the train is invisible and silent."

We are approaching more nearly to the *Scriptural idea of evangelism*. While modern evangelism has been characterized by great earnestness, fiery zeal, and in most instances, a faithful presentation of the truth, yet there has been much "spurious evangelism." Evangelism has been made to "cover a multitude of sins"; and a great deal has been done in the name of evangelism which cannot be warranted by Scripture or good sense. Emotionalism is no more evangelism than is perspiration inspiration. Many efforts at evangelism have been at random, "as one that beateth the air," rather than intelligent and well directed. Everything that makes the claim cannot be called evangelism. We must have clear conceptions as to what evangel-

ism really is before we can perform wisely this most important of all services.

What is evangelism? That question is answered in a most satisfactory manner by President E. Y. Mullins in his "Axioms of Religion," when he says: "Evangelism is the proclamation to the soul of man that God has provided a trysting-place, so to speak, for God and man in Christ. In Christ they meet, and face to face settle their controversy. The incarnation is God's self-revelation as a person, the atonement is His provision for human sin. Evangelism is the approach of the divine to the human person. The high respect which God pays to the human personality is seen in the fact that His transaction with every sinner in Christ is on the basis of that sinner's private and personal needs and conditions. . . . Evangelism is the method of God for setting the soul free. He regenerates the spirit of man and thus transforms it into a regenerator of human society. Through evangelism, therefore, God grapples directly with man's deepest problem, emancipation from sin."

"Evangelism" has been so much abused both in word and deed that the term suggests to many minds not the substance of evangelism but the form by which the work has been carried on. Man's attention has been attracted by "the things that are seen" when the truth is, the real power in evangelism consists of hidden forces

operating within the sphere of the inner being. "To evangelize," says Dr. Henry C. Mabie in "Method in Soul-Winning," "is to tell the good news, that which is really news and that which is surprisingly joyful news,— a real saving message. To evangelize is to point out to men how they may come into a new moral and religious status, under a régime which God has made possible through the sacrificial work of Himself in His Son. To evangelize a soul is to make clear to it the evangelical status made possible for it by Christ." Therefore we need to lay the stress where it belongs: upon the power and effectiveness of the Gospel which under the direction of the Spirit is able to save a soul from death and not upon any other agencies which may be used in connection with true evangelism. Here as everywhere else: "We look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal."

In the era now approaching we shall doubtless come to a higher appreciation of *the psychic side of evangelism*. We need not look askance at the results of psychological research because some students of it have blundered here and there. Some Bible students have blundered just as badly with reference to the truth. The two factors of knowledge which rendered the Son of

man the greatest of evangelists were: that He was "in the bosom of the Father," and that "He Himself knew what was in man." He knew God and man and was therefore capable of leading man to God. Next to Jesus in the knowledge of the inner man was the Apostle Paul. Marvelous was his insight into the powers and processes of the human soul. If any one doubts the apostle's ability as a psychologist let him read that most intricate analysis of his own experience in the seventh chapter of Romans. Throughout his writings it is shown that he was a master of the science of the human soul. Much of the evangelistic effort which has resulted disastrously for some might have been avoided had the leaders known the fundamental elements of psychology.

Practically all that relates to religious experience from the human point of view is psychological. As says Henry W. Clark in "The Philosophy of Christian Experience": "Conversion, repentance, faith are all practical affairs, for they are parts of the art of character-making, as religion essays to teach it: these words stand for definite processes, even though it be within the limits of a single personality, and not upon a stage which all the world can see, that the processes are worked out: they show the lines over which the self in each man has to make its journey; and if religion be divided into matters

theoretical and matters practical, the experiences to which these words and all their closely related words refer must be counted on the practical side."

Let us hope that Christian people generally are coming to *deeper convictions as to doctrine, experience, and duty*. There has been and is now a great deal of laxness as to convictions of religious truth. To hear some Christians talk you would conclude that one would be blessed just as much in believing error as in believing truth. Some are willing to concede everything for the sake of being considered broad and liberal. We can be broad in our sympathies towards our religious neighbours, and heartily coöperate with them where there is a common good to be obtained and where no sacrifice of principle is involved. But we must ever bear in mind that if we would be true to God we can at no time afford to become broader than the truth itself. We can never, in any circumstances, substitute sentiment for truth. It is the duty of each believer to search diligently that he may know the New Testament teaching with reference to determining his church connections; then let him "angle himself" according to the belief of the church of his choice and believe in and work in it with all his might. "And ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free."

The churches are to become the centres from

which all evangelistic and missionary efforts are to proceed. The day is past for evangelists to sneer at the churches. The churches are not what they ought to be by any means but they are the best agencies we have for the propagation of gospel truth. Some have thought the churches so imperfect that they could get along better without them than with them. But their mistake is now evident, for we have seen that religious service of any kind apart from the churches is, from the very nature of the case, only temporary. Evangelists, missionaries, and all other religious workers, must be approved, sent out from, and directed by the churches if their labours are to be effective and the results lasting. We heartily agree with Dr. G. Campbell Morgan when he says: "Evangelism apart from the Church is apart from Christ, and is therefore no evangelism. There can be no evangelism save that of Jesus Christ, and that can only be spoken by Christ Himself through His people by the Holy Spirit. Anything calling itself evangelism which has not the outcome of the new life of Christ, realized in the soul of men, and spoken through men by Christ, is not evangelism." ↵

Pastors are getting new visions of the possibilities within their grasp. One of the most hopeful signs of the coming evangelism is the arousing of pastors to a sense of their obligation to do all that the pastoral office requires, including evan-

gelism. Heretofore, this work has been thought to be the work of the specialist, hence the evangelist has been relied upon to do the chief part of this work for the pastors. We need the evangelist yet to do pioneer work in destitute fields and to strengthen weak churches. But pastors are becoming more sensitive to their duty to evangelize in their own fields. "There are a few accredited evangelists in our country," says Dr. Charles L. Goodell, in "Pastoral and Personal Evangelism." "They are kept busy all the time, and could multiply themselves indefinitely, if only they were able to do it, but they can be in but one place at a time. . . . The only hope of winning our land to Christ rests upon the individual pastor and the individual church. If we can have a hundred thousand pastors who are inspired of God and yield themselves to His holy purposes, and if only a score of members were to join, each of them in uttermost devotion, this would give us a power in every town and city which would be simply irresistible."

There is also an awakening among the lay-members of our churches as to their part in the world's salvation. They are not only becoming soul-winners but "world-winners." We are glad to welcome this new word to our vocabulary; it ought to inspire us to greater things. To become a "world-winner"—what a thought! And yet that is the privilege which God gives to every

one of His children. We are Christ's in so far as we seek to make the mission of Christ the mission of our lives. Christ said: "I came . . . to save the world" (John xii. 47). So can each disciple say by the help of our God: "I am here to save the world." Personal evangelism is the cry of our age; and if all that "love His appearing" would enter the work with a new zest, the world might be brought to Christ in a few decades. "Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations."

After all, *the new era of evangelism*, we may confidently hope, *will be a return to the New Testament era*, but let us not wait until some great trial like the persecution of that time shall thrust us out into the work of going "everywhere preaching the word." Rather let us enter the work willingly. A return to New Testament ideals and standards—which is in essence what we mean by "Normal Evangelism"—will necessitate the elimination of whatever is unscriptural in evangelism. The Word of God is our standard in all things and in evangelism as in other things we need to "learn not to go beyond the things that are written" (1 Cor. iv. 6). We fear that false colours have at times been discernible in the banner of the evangel. The Bible is *the book* for all times. Conditions may demand a difference in the application of the fundamental principles of evangelism but never any change in the prin-

Conservative
discernation.

ciples themselves. The question of highest importance in all our labours is not: "Does this or that violate the spirit and teaching of the Scriptures?" but: "Can this or that be warranted by the teaching of the Scriptures?" This rule applied everywhere would soon work a great change in the present-day methods of evangelism.

Whether we are on the verge of a great revival or not remains to be seen; but let us hope and pray that we are. Of this much we can be sure: that if pastors and churches everywhere put themselves in the right relation to God there will be a revival such as the world has never seen before. Let us therefore pray for and expect—not an "old-fashioned revival"—but *the revival we need* and I am sure God will give it to us. Let us enter the work with a new abandon, for a brighter day is dawning. Let us pray earnestly and continually for the presence and power of God's Holy Spirit. Let us get ready for a revival and a revival will come. God's promises are sure: "Bring ye the whole tithe into the storehouse that there may be food in My house, and prove now herewith saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open the windows of heaven and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it" (Mal. iii. 10).

As a small aid towards the attainment of the

ideals set forth in this chapter the following pages are written. My appeal is to the great body of Christian people—preachers and laymen. The one to whom little is given must realize and do his part as well as the one to whom much is given. There are some who, as it were, “mount up on wings as eagles,” but it takes more grace to “walk and not faint.” After all it is the man who plods, works, and prays that does the most for the world’s redemption. It is the soldier who carries the rifle, and not the man who fires the cannon, that wins the victory. It is true, each has his place to fill: the man who fires the cannon adds dignity to the occasion, and serves a good purpose in that he strikes terror to the heart of the enemy and inspires his comrades with courage; but the success or defeat depends on the musketry. So it is in the army of the Lord: we have the artillery, and we are glad we have for it serves a noble purpose; but we cannot depend upon it alone to win the victory. Let every one who bears the name of Christ take up arms in the conflict and in His name march on to the final conquest. “And this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.”

II

The Passing of the Professional Evangelist

Modern evangelism makes much of numbers, parading statistics, and often with reckless mode of reckoning. It is easy to secure a show of numbers, but such numerical estimates are very deceptive and misleading. If superficial means be adopted; if people are encouraged to think that some simple outward act or step carries merit or brings salvation; or if in any way there is a carnal appeal to the hope of some self-advantage, there will be a ready response. Sometimes an evangelist promises to all who sign his converts' roll some helpful book of his own. Even such promise, however unselfish on his part, he has to guard carefully, lest some give their names for what they get. And the more spiritual a man's methods are, and the more exalted his conception of his work, the less he will rely upon apparent results or make a show of numerical success.—*A. T. Pierson.*

My first criticism of present-day evangelism, if I may use so strong a word as criticism, is of its too spectacular methods. Whole campaigns are not infrequently conducted with as much regard to the effect produced upon the outside public mind as would be done by a circus or a theatre show. If I mistake not, the word *publicity* as now so often used in the sense of advertising is of the evangelist's coining. But be that as it may, a publicity committee or agent is too often supposed to be one of the first requisites of a successful evangelistic campaign period. In not a few cases the secular press is practically subsidized, not only by the expenditure of disproportionate sums in advertising, but by inducing reporters, by one means or another, to write up sensational accounts of the meetings and give them striking head-lines and abundant illustration. Prominent names are sought for the committee lists; society women, who are not always interested in church but fond of notoriety, are persuaded to open their homes for parlour meetings; torches, brass bands, processions, newspaper cuts, slumming parties—these are but a few of the spectacular means and methods sometimes resorted to.—*John Balcom Shaw.*

II

THE PASSING OF THE PROFESSIONAL EVANGELIST

IT is with no small degree of trepidation that a discussion of this character is entered into, not that there is any doubt in my mind as to the correctness of the position taken on this question, but because I count myself wholly unworthy to express what appears to be a criticism upon the work of our "evangelist" brethren, many of whom there are "the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to stoop down and unloose." Then, too, I hesitate because I fear that some of the statements which I feel constrained to make may be misunderstood by some of my brethren, as has been the case when I have spoken on this subject in ministers' conferences and elsewhere. Therefore, allow me the privilege of entering a protest against being misunderstood by saying that: I appreciate every effort that these brethren are making to advance the kingdom of God; I believe that many of these brethren are earnest, godly, efficient men who are in the work for the love of souls and are willing to "burn out" for God and humanity;

that God has set His seal of approval upon their labours by giving them many precious souls as their reward ; that their work in a great many instances will stand throughout eternity as a monument to their faith, zeal and consecration ; that we shall have need for sane, conservative "evangelists" as long as there remains an unsaved human being on earth.

Then why speak against "professional evangelism"? It is not my purpose to depreciate it so much as *to protest against an undue reliance upon it as a means of evangelizing the world.* Pastors and churches have depended too much upon the work of the "evangelist" to do the work for them which they themselves should have been doing through all these years. A young pastor, when asked by an older minister as to what he would do at a time of special revival interest in his church, replied by saying that he would send for an evangelist; that is a reflection of the spirit of the present age. The motto of many churches and pastors seems to be: We never do anything ourselves that we can get somebody else to do. It has never occurred to many a pastor that he could lead his flock in any successful effort in evangelism and it has never occurred to many a church that such a thing could be done. Hence has arisen the demand for men of "special evangelistic gifts," and churches and pastors are as much responsible

for the condition of affairs by creating this demand as are the "evangelists" for responding to the demand with the kind of "evangelism" they are giving us at the present time.

There is need for an evangelism of that type in which an effort is made *not only to win people to Christ, but also to develop churches and pastors in the work of soul-winning.* And we have some ministers both from the ranks of pastors and "professional evangelists" who are doing a much needed work in that direction. If the "professional evangelist" would justify his work (and I say this because there is some question as to the worth of it on the whole) let him seek not only the salvation of the lost, but such a development of the evangelistic idea in the minds of pastors and people where he goes that it will not be necessary for him and others of his class to continue their visits to that particular field. Such a specimen, however, is very rare, for, as a rule, wherever the "peripatetic evangelist" goes he leaves his mark, as is the tradition regarding certain other "peripatetics," so that others find it easy to go in and out and find pasture. Thus it happens that where the "evangelist" goes once he must go again, for the people soon come to think that they cannot do without him.

No *modern error* has wrought greater harm to the churches of the present time than the idea that *there cannot be a revival without a "revival-*

ist." And by that term is usually meant one who has a peculiar fitness for that work unattainable by the majority of ministers and Christians. So when things begin to drag in church affairs, and the brethren begin to talk about what ought to be done, one of the first suggestions usually is: "Let's send for an evangelist." The suggestion meets with a chorus of "amens" and a search is at once begun to find one who has the most glaring record. "There is Brother Blank," says one, "who held a meeting down at Stiruptown. From all reports he must be a wonderful man and is just the preacher we need for our town and our church. They say that he has stirred up the town and that is certainly what we need up here. He attacked the city administration; the mayor was impeached; three of the councilmen resigned; the saloon element fought against him and made an attack on him one night as he was going home from church; and on two other occasions he came very near having street fights which was prevented only by the intervention of friends. As a result several of the leaders were arrested and had to pay fines. The meeting was a glorious success; the house was packed every night; people came for miles around; and one night a special train was run from neighbouring towns just for the meeting; there were over three hundred additions to the church; and they say that there never was such a meeting

in that part of the state in the memory of the oldest inhabitant."

After a good deal of correspondence as to finances, advertising, and so forth, the "evangelist" comes. He soon lets them know "who's who" and "what's what" and that they may expect marvellous things to happen if his work there is to be judged by what he has just done in the cities and towns where he has been. The people are made to open their eyes in astonishment, for although they have heard of his greatness as an "evangelist" they now realize that the half has never been told them; if all he says of himself be true, he must be the greatest man since the days of the Apostle Paul, and no doubt if he had been living at that time that apostle would never have been heard from. He thus makes a good beginning by causing the people to expect great things of him. Of course, he tells them that the Lord has to be in the meeting but they must understand that the "evangelist" is in the meeting already and for that reason something is going to happen. They have had the Lord before but they had not done much, but now that they have the "evangelist" added to their side of the equation they may expect a great deal to be done. He assures them that they are going to have a good time together and after some pleasing jokes, a multitude of instructions, and a brilliant little gem of a sermon the

first meeting adjourns and high hopes are entertained as to the success of the "revival."

Things move along very pleasantly for two or three days until the "evangelist" begins to feel that it is time to wake them up a little. He has waited as long as he can and is impatient to begin the scathing process in which he greatly delights. He gives them a few "broadsiders" as to their laxness, worldliness, and indifference, especially, if they are not quick to respond to all his appeals. He measures the piety and spiritual life of that church and community by their willingness or unwillingness, as the case may be, to respond to his various and multitudinous propositions. If their response is hearty, they are the best people in the world; if not, then they are about the worst people he has ever tried to labour among and he lets them know that he has never been so shamefully treated anywhere in all his life. He has mourned unto them and they have not wept; he has piped unto them and they have not danced. He weeps and wails aloud because the people are not doing what he wants them to do. The truth is that their refusal to respond to needless and repeated invitations is the best evidence of their good sense and not an index to a dearth of spiritual life.

The people come in great crowds, for they think of the "evangelist" not so much as a preacher of the Gospel as a sort of spiritual enchanter by

whose tricks and manipulations people are artfully and mysteriously led into becoming Christians. Instead of his being simply the bearer of the *good news* of salvation, too often the old Gospel is pushed into the background and an array of scenes, incidents and accidents is brought before the minds of the people in the form of stories, anecdotes and illustrations, ranging all the way from the sublime to the ridiculous, interspersed with meteoric bursts of sophomoric eloquence, with now and then a faint gleam of gospel light appearing between acts. Oh, my brethren, has the Gospel lost its power when such means are used to bring men to Christ? No, thank God, it has not lost its power; but in spite of all the stuff that is palmed off as "Gospel" the blessed old Gospel is still "the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." It is more evident than ever before that the Gospel has in it power to transform and make anew the lives of sinful men all because it brings to their hearts and consciences a living, personal Christ who is "the power of God and the wisdom of God." And what we need is men to preach it in its purity and simplicity which means to preach it with power.

It is soon manifest that the average "professional evangelist" is a sort of "religious boss" lording it over God's heritage. His success has made him vainglorious and dictatorial. His

arrogance and self-sufficiency stand out in bold contrast with the meekness and humility of "Philip the evangelist" who while preaching to the Samaritans allowed Peter and John to come and direct and counsel him in his work. Now can you imagine the modern "evangelist" as being directed by any one? He will have no Peter and John coming around interfering with his affairs. He will be wagon, team, driver and all himself and no one dare think a suggestion to him much less utter it. If he does, it is regarded as a gross offense, and woe unto him by whom offenses come. When he is once there he lets it be known that he came to direct and not to be directed even by the pastor whom he is assisting. The leadership must be turned over to him and too frequently it is not wisely used. The pastor must retire into the background and submit to a sort of game of "Simon says wiggle-wag." "Thumbs up," or "Thumbs down" must be according to the dictates of "Simon." He is the master of the situation and when he says "wiggle-wag," why, there's nothing to do but to "wiggle-wag." So the pastor must "wiggle-wag" along with the rest of the folks whether he wants to or not; for if he does not he is thought to be irreverent, indifferent, lacking in spirituality, and not strictly orthodox; he is soon informed that his example is having its baleful effect upon the meeting, so he must go through the motion just

to keep up appearances if for no other reason, although he may seriously doubt the wisdom of the methods used. Is it any wonder that after the "evangelist" is gone and the pastor tries to get down to solid work once more that he feels that he is pulling against a cold collar, as it were, and that the load seems mighty heavy? He is just trying to regain that mastery which he lost when he turned over the leadership to another and he may have to work long and hard before it is his again; and if he fails to regain it—there is likely to be a change of pastorates very soon. No pastor can labour long in any field where his leadership is not recognized and followed. Had he never surrendered that leadership things might have been very different with him and with his church as far as their future relations are concerned.

The revival goes on with ever-increasing power. The town is stirred up religiously as never before. The evangelist's effort to create a sensation by attacking the city administration fell flat because a few of the Christian citizens of the town told him that they were reasonably satisfied with the administration and that he could afford to be as he was there for a few days only. He then proceeds to pay his respects to the churches and their members, for he is bound to attack something. He scolds, berates, and holds them up to ridicule. He storms the religious

citadel with such vehemence and hurls against it such anathemas that the man of the world rejoices in the fact that he is not within the pales of any church and makes up his mind that he never will be, for from what the "evangelist" says church people must be about the worst lot of folks on earth and a man is about as well off out of the church as in it. At the meeting for *men only* he exhibits such a vocabulary of corrupt speech and reveals such intimate knowledge of all kinds of sin and vice that men begin to wonder how he, a minister of the Gospel, ever came to have such knowledge and such a vocabulary, and some, at least, avow that they will never attend a meeting of that kind again. But he is great on counting numbers and in making a display of his piety, for near the close of the meeting he holds an all-night prayer-meeting and the next day he sends telegrams to all the religious newspapers within his knowledge: "Four hundred additions to date. Spent all night in prayer." That is a great deal to tell in ten words and he rejoices to tell it. The meeting closes in a blaze of glory and—exit "evangelist."

But when the "evangelist" is gone, having "skimmed the cream of the congregation with two or three good collections," as a good Methodist brother expressed it, the pastor looks around to find that he has on hand something else besides skimmed milk. The drag-net

has been used and he observes that there has been "inclosed a great multitude" of church-members. In vain he looks about for a "partner" to whom he might beckon for assistance, but there is none to help him. He must tread the wine-press alone. There have been large congregations, large numbers of professions, large calculations, but now the most conspicuous part of the "revival" is the large difficulties which the pastor has on his hands. His difficulties have been multiplied instead of being diminished. How is he to interest, hold, train and develop this great army of converts, many of whom joined the "evangelist" instead of the church? and hence their relation to the pastor is not very close. For after the ordinary "revival" the converts feel that they have joined something—the biggest part of which is gone. They have been born during the exciting time of a "revival" and seem not to have any religious impulses except under similar conditions. Their growth is arrested to begin with and they seldom make any further progress. Many of them have been *sentimentally* born instead of *religiously* born and they act from sentimentalism rather than from religious conviction. Very truly has the author of "The Unfolding Life" said: " 'Sentimentalists' have lost the power to act except in tears or ejaculations when their emotions are stirred, and 'hardened' people

have lost the power to feel under ordinary stimulation." That the modern "revival" is responsible for many spiritual dwarfs within our ranks to-day cannot be questioned. Of course, it would be unjust to hold the modern "evangelist" accountable for all the defects observable in those who have professed conversion in their meetings, but it is an undeniable fact that in a very large number of cases the converts of such "revivals" amount to very little in the service of Christ. There may be some signal exceptions both as to "evangelists" and "converts," but the fact remains that a very small residuum of the "professional evangelist's" work is conserved by the churches of to-day even after the most strenuous effort on the part of pastors and their people.

The standard set by modern "revivals" is often abnormal and for that reason, if for no other, should not be maintained. People are led to measure everything in a religious sense by the "revival" standard. The ordinary "revival" as a religious bill of fare is very palatable to many people, but the effects are not altogether wholesome. Many church-members, if they were allowed to choose their own religious bill of fare, would display about as much wisdom in their selections as would an eight-year-old boy in the choice of his daily menu: cherries, plums, green apples, peanuts, cakes, mince-pie,

ice-cream and what-not would be his chief delight with the result: a depraved appetite, deranged digestive organs, a dwarfed body, a weakened mind—a burden to himself and his family. Many grown-ups think that they would like for every day the kind of religious bill of fare that is dished out to them during special “revivals”: great crowds, big choirs, spirited singing, enthusiastic testimonies, stirring sermons, showy advertising, sensational newspaper reports, with a blast of trumpets and excitement on every hand. The effects on the people religiously are about the same as on the boy physically: they become possessed of such depraved appetites that solid food is distasteful to them and the ordinary church service becomes dry and uninteresting. They become spiritual dyspeptics and not being able to endure “strong meat” they remain “babes in Christ,” dwarfed and inactive—until the next “revival” comes around and when that is over the last state is often worse than the first. They feel while the “revival” is going on: “Oh, why can’t we have things this way all the time?” And when the “revival” is over—well, they do not seem to feel at all—not even their duty to attend the church services or to take up any regular service for Christ. Everything except the “revival” is tame, insipid and unattractive. They are much like the little boy who was in the habit

of going to the prayer-meeting with his grandmother—both enjoying it very much. One day a circus came along and the little boy went to see it. He came home in high spirits over his visit to the circus, and his first greeting to his grandmother was: “ Oh, grandmother, you just ought to have been with me at the circus! Grandmother, if you were to go with me just once to the circus you would never want to go to the prayer-meeting again.” The little boy’s standard had changed or rather had been demoralized. Whereas he had previously measured every enjoyment by the prayer-meeting, he has now come to measure them by the circus. We would not belittle the modern “ evangelist’s ” work by comparing it with a circus, but we do know that the usual standard set by their “ revivals ” is not helpful to the highest development of Christian life and service.

It is not a question as to whether the “ professional evangelist ” is doing good, so much as *a question as to whether he is needed to do the kind of work which is done by him at the present time.* The office of “ evangelist ” as we have it to-day, except in a missionary sense (see Chapter III), is not a Scriptural office. According to Prof. W. O. Carver, Th. D., the *evangelist* in New Testament times was the home missionary while the *apostle* was the foreign missionary. In the light of this interpretation, which we accept as

correct, we can readily see that the "professional evangelist" belongs to neither class. In fact he is very difficult of classification. Like a certain specimen which the scientist finds with characteristics indicating that it belongs to a particular class, yet possessing other characteristics which forbid such classification, so the "professional evangelist" possesses some of the qualifications of the New Testament evangelist in that he preaches the *good news* of salvation, at least a part of the time, yet this does not entitle him to the name—"evangelist" any more than is the pastor entitled to it who preaches the Word faithfully. Dr. Goodell is right when he says, "No man with a special and limited function has any right to monopolize the name—evangelist." On the other hand, the "professional evangelist" possesses methods, manners and so forth of such questionable character as to disqualify him utterly for the name *evangelist* in the original sense. So far as the New Testament goes, and that is our only guide, there is not one particle of authority for the "professional evangelist" as we now have him—who goes up and down the length and breadth of our land simply holding meetings, and for the most part, with pastors and churches which are self-sustaining and wholly capable of doing the work which he does far more effectively if they only had a mind to do so. All this he does without accounting to any church or its

representatives as he should do if he would reckon himself to be a New Testament evangelist.

That the brethren who are thus engaged in religious work are needed more in other capacities may be seen from the two simple facts which are here given: The Year Book of one of the leading denominations for 1909 shows that there are in this country 48,302 churches of that particular denomination, and 34,132 ordained ministers, which reveals the remarkable fact that the excess of churches over ministers is 14,170. Of course, it will be remembered that a number of these ministers have more than one church, but that is more than offset by the fact that so many of these ministers have not the care of churches. They are teachers, presidents, editors, secretaries, while many are superannuated, or inactive as far as religious work is concerned. Now add to this list those who are engaged in "evangelistic work" and we can see that of necessity a large number of churches must remain pastorless and thus run the risk of becoming extinct, or merely maintain an existence with meagre pastoral assistance from one minister who has three or four churches on hand. Then when we think of many calls for helpers in our various mission fields, does it not seem that we have an overlapping in religious interests such as is not warranted by present needs and conditions or by the teaching of the Word of God? And does it not seem reasonable

that if the great majority of "professional evangelists" were to go, either into the pastorate where they can do effective evangelistic work, or into the destitute regions beyond as did the evangelists of New Testament times—in other words, become real missionaries, that our evangelizing forces would be greatly increased? and that churches and pastors, having the temptation to depend so much on outside assistance removed, would throw themselves more heartily into the work to which God is calling them? Of course, we do not fear that such a suggestion will create a panic in the ranks of "professional evangelists," for some preachers are afflicted with a sort of nervous impatience that will not allow them to settle down in one place long enough to do anything permanent; others do not hesitate to say that they find the "evangelistic work" more lucrative; some are in the work simply as a pastime until an opportunity for a better field comes before them; some are there because they have a conviction that God can use them in that particular work better than in any other; so, for these reasons there is no immediate prospect of an exodus of "professional evangelists." Not until pastors and churches come to a right conception as to their obligations and spheres of activity is there likely to be brought about this much-needed adjustment in the method of extending Christ's kingdom.

One of the strongest evidences that the "professional evangelist" is passing away is the fact that there is "a growing distrust" as to his work. He has been weighed in the balance and found wanting. The high-pressure methods of the "modern evangelist" have been found to be harmful to church life and the reactionary effect has often proven a bar to any successful evangelistic effort on the part of churches and their pastors afterwards. A prominent clergyman of England writes thus: "All our efforts have to come through God-chosen and self-devoted people; the conversion of the sinner and the training of the child must ever be the elementary tasks. There is an ever-increasing offer to help the local pastor in holding evangelistic services; brethren in the neighbourhood show themselves neighbourly, caravans bring around humble workers for a week's mission; motor cars transport leaders through a string of villages to dazzle and inspire the solitary workers. But there seems to be a growing distrust of mammoth advertising campaigns such as were once conducted with effect, but which now leave no visible trace after dislocating the Christian efforts of a town for several weeks. Spade work is being relied upon more than steam plows."

The "evangelist" of to-day does not preach a whole Gospel and for that reason he does not meet the need of his time. What sinners and

Christians need is "the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth." This the "professional evangelist" does not give in his preaching. He preaches to move people to action and leaves much Bible truth that is vital and fundamental wholly untouched. We condemn the practice of some of the so-called scholars of to-day who go through the Bible and with scissors and blue pencil cutting out and marking out whatever their own self-instructed judgment tells them should not be there. But how much better is the practice of going through the Word of God selecting those passages to preach from which suits one's fancy and at the same time omitting others whose truth is just as vital? The covering of the truth in their living leads to such omissions in their preaching. And we ask sincerely: Can such omission of the plain teaching of the Scriptures be justified on any ground whatever? It is said of one of the leading "evangelists" of to-day by a writer in *The Christian Evangelist*, St. Louis: "Most of his references to the church were by way of attack upon the imperfect lives of its members. Rarely did he say aught that would lead the sinner to feel that the church could be of any service to him; and captious spirits could justify themselves in scorning the invitation of the church to enter its fellowship by his silence as to the importance of the ministry of the church to men.

Had he frequently and earnestly urged the converts to enter the church of their choice, assuring them that, despite its sins and imperfections, the church was the divine method of Jesus for giving spiritual strength and culture, the results in additions would have been much greater."

Our plea is for normal evangelism ; for more reliance upon earnest prayer, faithful preaching of the Word, the leading of the Holy Spirit, persistent personal effort, and less reliance upon the "evangelist" with his clap-trap methods. "Evangelists" have no doubt done a great deal of good but in many cases it is some good, plus or minus so much harm. God has raised up great "evangelists" to meet the need of the time and they have wrought nobly. In most cases their work was to fill up the gap, so to speak, which had been made by the neglect of pastors and churches to discharge their obligation to the unsaved world. It is quite evident that God never intended to save the world through the ministry of great "evangelists" or He would not have made so few of them. Here and there along through the ages God has raised up a Wesley, a Whitfield, a Finney, a Moody, a Torrey, a Gypsy Smith, to meet a pressing need and to show what He can do with a life that surrenders itself fully to Him. What He has done for these men He will in a large measure do

for all His servants. "Power belongeth unto God." Therefore, let the people of God everywhere have a vision of a redeemed world through the service of Spirit-filled ministers and aroused churches; and then let them quicken their pace towards the goal of victory.

Let no one think that this chapter is meant to be a wholesale condemnation of "evangelists." Our chief aim has been to point out some of the defects of modern evangelism; in the following pages it shall be our purpose to show "a more excellent way." No doubt some one will say: "You must have had some very unpleasant experiences with evangelists." No, such is not the case, for I have never had a professional evangelist to aid me in a meeting. My information has been gathered by a study of this question for several years. There are evangelists, however, on whom I would not hesitate to call if conditions were such that their assistance were needed. There are evangelists and *evangelists*. There are some brethren who are giving their whole time to the work of evangelism who might be technically called "professional evangelists," yet who are not because they do not bear the marks of professionalism. Some of these brethren have been pastors and avoid the objectional features of modern evangelism; they are able to render valuable assistance to churches and pastors needing assistance, and many of them are qualified to

carry on the work of the pioneer in opening new fields and in establishing new churches. There are some who are safe, sane, and sound; then there are some who are otherwise; the *otherwise* are the ones whom we should guard against. It is not the passing of the evangelist that is desired so much as the passing of his professionalism. The evangelist in the true sense is needed; but his professionalism is not needed in any sense.

III

The Pastor As An Evangelist

I am persuaded that America is at the beginning of a new day of evangelism, and, if this new day is to have one distinguishing characteristic, I am confident that it will be personal evangelism. One of the most hopeful signs of the times is that pastors and church officers are being awakened as to the sense of responsibility.—*J. Wilbur Chapman.*

I believe that *individual evangelism ought to be the watchword of our new century.* I am not disposed to discount the professional evangelist; he has his God-given place; but I am profoundly convinced that, as a rule, the pastor and his people ought to do the work. The very endeavour prepares the Church to be such a spiritual mother as she cannot otherwise be. It is our prime business to be continually searching for souls. We need not revival spasms, but the kind of spiritual vigour that continues through all the year.—*Samuel H. Greene.*

But the question in my mind is this, Is the gift of the evangelist so unique that it cannot be expected in the average minister? I cannot admit that it is. The power of the evangelist usually lies not so much in the superiority of the gift as in the superior earnestness, manifesting itself in great directness of appeal and positive belief in the immediate results. And, if that be the case, it is clear that it is a gift within the reach of most of us. If we have it not, it is because we have not sought to possess it. We have not made it our business to save souls. We have not studied the art of persuasion. We have been content with some other function, more agreeable to our taste, which we have vainly imagined more important. Hence we come to regard the evangelist as an expert in a branch of spiritual science which really belongs to the mere alphabet of our own calling as ministers. Expert in the winning of souls the evangelist may be, and let us thankfully acknowledge his gift; but the minister in his regular pastorate should be an expert too; and if he is not, nor seeks to be, it may be gravely doubted whether he is not false to his high vocation as the ambassador of Christ.—*W. J. Dawson.*

III

THE PASTOR AS AN EVANGELIST

THERE are two exhortations in the Word of God which the pastor can never afford to lose sight of, namely: "Feed the flock of God which is among you" (1 Pet. ii. 5), and, "Do the work of an evangelist" (2 Tim. iv. 5). In these two statements is set forth the whole sphere and compass of the pastor's work. To fail to heed either of these exhortations would be to make a fatal mistake. The only condition under which a pastor might be released from his obligation to serve in these capacities would be: either that there was no flock of God to feed, or that there were no unbelievers to whom the Gospel might be preached. It is the duty—the mission of the pastor to do both when possible; and the pastor who contents himself with doing one and not the other consents to do only half of what God intended he should do. And there are few, if any, among us who do not have the opportunity both *to feed the flock of God*, and to *do the work of an evangelist*. Therefore, the pastor is duty-bound to "make full proof" of his ministry.

We find, by examining these two passages a little more closely, the former applies to the minister of the Gospel in his relation as pastor: to feed, nourish, and tend the flock of God over which the Holy Spirit has made him overseer; while the latter sets forth the relation of the minister to the unsaved, as the bearer of the glad tidings of salvation to those who know not Christ. Taken together, they are simply *a restatement of the Great Commission* which every true minister of Jesus Christ seeks to carry out in his life-work. Jesus did not say to one group of disciples: "Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit"; and then to another group: "teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you"; but He combined these statements in such a way as to make them binding on each individual disciple, and therefore on every preacher of the Gospel from that to the present time—yea, for all time. Now the pastor above all others is in a position to fulfill our Lord's last great command to "make disciples" and "to teach"; he can as no one else "do the work of an evangelist" and "feed the flock of God," and if he does not do so he has fallen far short of his obligations and privileges as a minister of Jesus Christ.

A pastor who preaches the whole Gospel is an evangelist. It is an interesting fact that the

words "evangelist" and "gospel" come from the same word in the original. "Gospel" (*εὐαγγέλιον*) means "the glad tidings of salvation through Christ." "Evangelist" (*εὐαγγελιστής*) means "a bearer of good tidings. . . . This name in the New Testament is given to those heralds of salvation through Christ who are not apostles" (Thayer). If there was a special and distinct work for the "evangelist" of that time he seems to have been under apostolic direction and was the missionary for the time, publishing the good news of salvation in regions where the Gospel was unknown. He corresponded to the missionary of our own time. Many of our best Bible students think that the office of "evangelist," as such, passed away with the period of the inauguration of Christianity as did that of "apostle." In his book on "Pastoral Theology," Prof. J. M. Hoppin says: "If, therefore, we use the term or employ the office now, we think that it should be wholly with this sense of a missionary work, of going into new parts, and proclaiming new tidings. It does not, therefore, seem to be advisable to regard the 'evangelist' as a separate office or a work distinct from that of the 'pastor' . . . for even the foreign or home missionary who goes forth into a new field as an 'evangelist' expects to gather a church and become its pastor." "The English word evangelist," says Prof. J. R. Boise, "has now acquired a

more limited meaning than the Greek word which signifies *one who preaches the Gospel* as pastor or in any other relation." Thus we can see, in the light of these reflections, that we have departed somewhat from the Scriptural idea of the word "evangelist." The word is now made to apply to just one class of gospel heralds, namely, those who go about holding meetings, when in reality every preacher who does his whole duty must *do the work of an evangelist* whether he preaches the Gospel in America, China, or the islands of the sea.

Pastors have failed in evangelism largely because they have failed in their conception as to what the pastoral office implies. The idea prevails to a large extent that a minister of Christ does not need to possess evangelistic gifts to be a leader and a teacher of the people in spiritual things. But is this the New Testament conception of the ministry? Did not Jesus teach His disciples that the first obligation they owed to Him and to the world about them was that they should become "fishers of men"? Now, to become "fishers of men" we must love men. There must be in us a holy passion for the souls of the lost. If the minister of the Gospel has within him this holy passion for souls he will not only seek to rescue them from sin and error but he will succeed in his efforts. Jesus has made this promise to all His true disciples: "Ye did not choose

Me, but I chose you, and appointed you, that ye should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide." This means that the disciple shall be effective in the work into which his Lord has called him. Did not Jesus say: "Come ye after Me, and I will make you to become fishers of men"? By His help, by His promise, yea, by His command we are to continue the work which our Lord did while on earth, namely, "to seek and to save that which is lost."

The evangelistic spirit is the highest qualification for the pastor. The evangelistic spirit is the spirit of love; and if the pastor has not enough love in his heart to seek by prayer, personal effort, and if need be by agony of spirit, the salvation of those lost in sin, he has not love enough to teach, nourish, and care for them after they are saved. If one had not concern enough for me to save me when I was at the point of drowning, I would naturally care very little for his words of congratulation upon my safe deliverance by the hands of another when I knew that had I depended upon his efforts to save me I would have been lost. The only pastor who is a safe leader of God's flock is the one who would risk all to save them if they were lost. The pastor who would instruct, inspire, and edify the Christian must be one who is willing to become all things to all men so that by all means he might save some who are lost. A spirit that

leads us to "seek and to save that which is lost" is the spirit that enables us to lead, teach, and nourish the flock of God. It is a love for humanity that we need. "If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal. And if I have the gift of prophecy, and know all mysteries and all knowledge; and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing." We may have the gift of eloquence; our speech may be with the adornment of the most exquisite rhetoric; we may excel in spiritual graces; we may have the widest range of knowledge; we may be able to instruct and entertain in the highest possible degree; but if we are lacking in that one essential for all Christian service, namely, *a love for lost souls*, it shall profit nothing. Love is the fulfilling of our ministry.

What shall we do when we look within and observe this *spiritual dearth* in our souls? I do not speak as one who has attained, for sometimes when I look within I am almost made to tremble because of the lack of spiritual fervour which I find there, but I do speak as one who is struggling towards the goal of a more consuming passion for those who are lost. What shall we do when we see how imperfectly we are doing the Master's work? We cannot go on as we are without this zeal for souls, for multitudes are perishing because

of our apathy. We cannot cease our efforts, for our Lord has placed us in this work and we have no right to lay it down without His command. It is not on record that He ever told any one to cease his labours after he had once begun; although He did tell one man who wanted to follow Him to return to his home [and there] tell what great things God had done for him (Luke viii. 38, 39); and another who expressed a desire to follow Him He admonished to consider the matter very carefully before he did so (Luke ix. 57 f.); but to no one labouring in His name did He ever say: "Cease your labours," even at the earnest request of His disciples (Mark ix. 38, 39). If we cannot go on as we are, and if we cannot stop, then what can we do? There is but one course open to us: let us go upon our knees in prayer to God that we, like our blessed Lord, may be "moved with compassion" towards suffering, sin-cursed humanity; that we may be inspired with a holy zeal for their salvation; and that we may have the faith and the courage to launch out into the deep and let down the net for a draught. Such a prayer from an earnest heart cannot fail of its reward. "And this is the boldness which we have towards Him, that, if we ask anything according to His will, He heareth us."

A study of present conditions will reveal the fact that *the spirit of evangelism is at a very low ebb in most of our churches.* Dr. Goodell says

in "Pastoral and Personal Evangelism": "The percentage of increase in Protestantism in the last decade has been the smallest of any decade in a hundred years. There has been much heart-searching on the part of ministers and laity, and the dawn of a better day glows already in the East." As is shown in these words, let us face the facts as they are, however displeasing they may be, but let us face them with the spirit of an optimist, for Christ is leading us onward. The optimistic spirit is the only spirit that will give success in this work. We as pastors are largely responsible for this state of affairs. No doubt we have failed in our duty in many respects, but it is my humble opinion that we have come nearer fulfilling those duties which relate to the pastoral part of our ministry than we have in filling up the measure of responsibility in regard to the evangelistic part. We as pastors have minimized evangelism as though it were a side issue, when the truth is we should magnify it as being first in importance in all our work. Jesus put this work first—both in precept and example—and should not we do the same? If we have made this mistake let us acknowledge it, search out the cause of it, and seek by the help of God to correct it.

One cause for *the minimizing of the evangelistic gift* and the spiritual dearth resulting from it, no doubt, is due to the fact that there are so

many shining examples of the non-evangelistic type of ministers. There is Doctor So-and-so, a scholarly, refined, elegant gentleman, and he is no part of an evangelist. He avows that he is not without any hesitation or apparent regret, and further demonstrates that he is not by the fact that he rarely has a conversion under his ministry. He shows his deep concern for the spiritual welfare of the community by importing a brother whom he denominates as belonging to the *evangelistic type* to do the work of an evangelist for him instead of doing it himself. He does the most important part of his ministerial work by proxy—a thing which he most vehemently condemns in the members of his flock. Then after the other preacher has done his work for him he moves calmly on without any apparent concern for the souls of the lost for the next fifty-two weeks in the year. His influence in thus evading his plain duty as a minister of Christ has its ill effect not only upon his own people but on other ministers who look upon him as the highest type of ministerial perfection.

The idea of *classifying preachers* into groups, such as the scholarly, oratorical, spiritual, executive, practical, and the evangelistic, has, no doubt, led many to conclude that it was a matter of little concern as to what group or type they belong. If one happened to belong to the non-evangelistic type it was all well and good, he thinks, for

that is the type best suited to his temperament, tastes, and preferences, and is the type to which a very large number of preachers belong. We recognize the fact that God can and does use men of different capacities, talents, and temperaments in the work of the ministry. It would be folly to insist that all ministers be made in the same mould, for even the early disciples of Jesus were very different in character and temperament; yet this must be observed in the early disciples, that, in spite of their idiosyncrasies, they were all evangelists. Even though there are some in whom the various qualities are more pronounced, that does not signify that we are not to make any effort to possess those qualities in which we recognize our own deficiency. For example: because I am conscious of the fact that I can never achieve distinction as a scholar need not deter me from an honest effort to be accurate in what I say and to seek original truth; the fact that I can never be a great orator, is no reason why I should not improve my powers of expression; the fact that I have not the evangelistic gifts of a Spurgeon or a Wesley does not mean that I have none at all. After all there is in reality only one type of true ministers and that is the evangelistic type; all other so-called types are only modifications of that one great type to which Jesus and His disciples belonged and to which all who love their Lord and Master should

belong. Let the minister of Christ first make sure that he is an evangelist and then he can be as pronounced as he pleases in all the other qualities which go to make up a "good minister of Jesus Christ."

We as pastors have not always lived up to the standard which we had at the beginning of our ministry. In his "Evangelistic Note," Mr. W. J. Dawson says: "Most ministers have commenced their ministries with evangelism. That which first led them to preach was a real passion for souls. Let the old man look back far enough, and he will see a youth full of warm enthusiasm pleading with men and women for their redemption—a youth who was once himself. What has changed him? Very often nothing more than the deadening effect of a continuous pastorate. He has come to regard himself rather as the calm expositor of truth than as its impassioned advocate. The note of appeal has disappeared, or has been willfully suppressed." Only a short time since I heard one of our leading pastors say that he had observed that many of the most impassioned evangelistic pastors of his acquaintance had sadly declined in their zeal for souls after they were fifty years of age. I immediately asked: "Need that be the case?" That is an interesting question for those below that mark as well as for those above it. Let every earnest preacher of the Gospel answer it for himself. Let us thank

God that there are some who have not lost their fiery zeal even though much beyond that age and that is sufficient to demonstrate that our zeal for God need not wane with declining years. I am sure that it will not wane if we keep our standard high enough. One of the largest business firms of this country has for its motto: "Keep the quality up." And that is not a bad motto for the ministry: let us keep the standard up. Let us keep the fire aglow within that it may not be said of us: "Thou didst leave thy first love."

Many have failed in their appreciation as to *what the evangelistic effort implies*. They think that anybody can be an evangelist and can preach an evangelistic sermon. They are of the opinion that the range of thought and the breadth of culture of the evangelistic preacher is necessarily limited; that as a minister advances in thought and culture he retrogrades in evangelistic fervour. There is an idea prevalent to-day that learning and culture are adverse to the spirit of evangelism. It was told me on good authority that a number of students in a certain school acted on that assumption and burned all the books they had in their possession except their Bibles. Such an assumption is a grievous error. There is no effort which a man can make that calls so much into play every power of his being as does the appeal to men to decide for Christ. To arouse interest, to hold the attention, to make clear the

message to the understanding, and to move the will to action requires all the energies of mind, soul, and body and affords opportunity for the very highest use of all the knowledge and culture a man has been able to acquire.

The time was when a man who had received some recognition as *a scholar was considered above making an effort in evangelism*. It was thought to be beneath his dignity. Nobody ever dreamed of a professor of theology as going out to engage in an evangelistic campaign. But I am glad the tide of thought is changing. Only a short time ago the president of the largest theological seminary in the country, who is also professor of theology in that institution, went to one of our Southern cities to begin an evangelistic campaign with a series of lectures. Now can you think of the erstwhile theological professor, Rev. Dr. Dry-as-dust, as going out to begin an evangelistic campaign? You would be about as likely to think of starting a fire on a cold winter morning by pouring water on the wood and kindling. And yet, why should not a professor of theology be an evangelist? I am glad to know that some of them are. For the very next week after the event in question the following item of news appeared in *The Baptist World*: "Evangelist H—— reports a glorious opening of the New Orleans campaign. Seven were converted at one of Dr. M——'s' lectures.

Several have given themselves to the ministry." As I read that simple announcement my heart rejoiced and I could not refrain the remark: "There we have the ideal combination—a man with intellectual acumen, breadth of scholarship, deep piety, and along with it all evangelistic fervour." Such men and such efforts and such results will in time restore evangelism to its proper place in the minds of the people generally and will exalt it to the first place in the ministry. Mr. Dawson's words are to the point when he says: "The evangelist will gain immensely in power by being also a thinker. . . . Can we refuse the deduction that evangelism has everything to gain and nothing to lose by the closest possible alliance with culture? And, in the conditions of our own time, with its constantly rising standard of education, is not the union of culture with evangelism absolutely necessary if evangelism is once more to become a national force?"

The imperative need of to-day is more evangelistic pastors—men who can and will lead their people in the work of soul-winning continually. We would not depreciate the work of the professional evangelist, for many of them have done and are doing a noble work for God—God bless them! but their large sphere of usefulness has been made possible chiefly by the dereliction of pastors to exercise and improve their own evangelistic gifts, and to foster the evangelistic

spirit in their churches. It is as great a sin for a man to depreciate his ability as it is for him to overestimate it. Too many pastors are afflicted with a sort of false modesty which tells them that it would be presumption for them to attempt an earnest, systematic, prolonged effort to win people to Christ, or to ask their people to join with them in making such an effort. Think of the men of a life-saving station hesitating as to whether they should go in and rescue those who are about to be lost! Many think they are not fitted for the work of rescuing those who are lost. Then why are we in the ministry? Has not Jesus said: "I will make you to become fishers of men"? It is not we after all who do the work but God who works through us. It is our business to preach the message faithfully, fervently, continually, and then we need not trouble ourselves as to whether God will do His part. His promise is sure: "So shall My Word be that goeth forth out of My mouth: it shall not return unto Me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it."

Every pastor is, therefore, an evangelist. Let each of us, then, strive to attain all that the office implies. Mr. Torrey recently said: "To be a pastor is the greatest honour ever bestowed on mortal man." Do we appreciate the possi-

bilities that are within our reach? I believe that the solution of almost every problem that touches the progress of our churches to-day shall have been reached when pastors become the leaders in all evangelistic movements, and when they lead their people to realize that pastors and people constitute the evangelizing forces through which shall be accomplished the redemption of the world. We must know that the work of the pastor is also the work of an evangelist; that they are not separate offices to be performed by separate persons, but functions of the same office to be performed by the same person; that God will hold us responsible if we are recreant to our duty in either respect. We need more men who—to use the words of Dr. A. C. Dixon—“preach an evangelistic Gospel, have evangelistic consciences, pursue evangelistic method, magnify evangelistic experience, and live the crucified life.”

IV

The Normal Church Evangelistic

Each church needs something to live for apart from itself and its own local work. Nothing short of participation in the sublime undertaking of the evangelization of the world is adequate to emancipate from selfishness, and to call out the best energies of mind and heart. How the missionary vision enlarges one's view of the world, of the church, and of the Gospel!—*John R. Mott.*

The normal condition of every church and every pastor is evangelistic. The bane of many a church, strong in numbers, intelligence, wealth, indeed, every element of strength but one, is that it has lost the seeking note. Congregations meet, preachers preach, the forms of worship are decorously observed, but all without any purpose to reach the lost. This brings deadness, and in this atmosphere of death, worldliness increases, sound doctrine decays, congregations disintegrate, in time the desolation of Zion is complete. Doctor Duff well said: "The church that ceases to be evangelistic soon ceases to be evangelical."—*George W. Truett.*

There are times in every church's history when a special meeting for the conversion of sinners will be the main object, and in which the aid of an evangelist or other pastor is especially needed. Yet it is very plain that no pastor ought to depend upon such meetings and such outside help as the sole means of winning souls for Christ. There is danger lest we come to think that sinners cannot be saved except at a special season, and that we come to depend too much upon these unusual and special means. I am persuaded that many of our churches and pastors are making serious mistakes just here, and are forgetting to look to God for conversions throughout the year, and by the ordinary means of grace.—*E. C. Dargan.*

IV

THE NORMAL CHURCH EVANGELISTIC

“ **A**ND the Lord added to them day by day those that were saved ” (Acts ii. 47). This is the record of the progress of the great revival which began on the day of Pentecost when three thousand were added to the apostolic church at Jerusalem. These disciples whose hearts must have greatly rejoiced because of the phenomenal results of that day’s labours might have reasoned thus: “ Surely this has been a wonderfully successful meeting ! The results have so far outreached our expectations that we can afford to do nothing for the next twelve months. We can now take a much needed rest. Some of us have been leading a pretty strenuous life for the past two or three years and now that our efforts have been so signally blessed we do not need to trouble ourselves about numbers for a long time to come. We have run up the figures in the column of the minutes of the next General Association to such a gratifying height that we can just do nothing for a long time to come and yet feel very comfortable.”

Yes, judging from the practice of many

churches at the present day, these early disciples might have reasoned that way but the truth of it is they did no such thing. To look with a sort of self-complacency upon the results of their efforts and then to cease their efforts when all around them were the perishing multitudes was a thing unthinkable with them. And it should be with us. The shame of it that our actions betray our thoughts that we do not expect a perpetual revival too. We ought to have it and could have it if we would do as those disciples did. The bane of the church's life in so many instances is the "dead level" to which it sinks soon after the revival season is over. There is something vitally wrong when this is the case. Once a pastor said in a minister's conference: "It was a common occurrence for us to have conversions at our regular services. The brethren wanted a certain evangelist to come and hold a meeting for us. It was against my judgment to do so but I yielded and allowed him to come. Never afterwards as long as I was pastor, and that was a good many years, were we able to hold a successful after-meeting." The revival in that instance had created an abnormal condition in which it was difficult to reach the unsaved. The normal church can never be developed or maintained by the abnormal revival. The revival will be needed, certainly, but let us seek to promote a revival of the right kind.

The Normal Church Evangelistic 87

Whenever a church is not adding to its membership from time to time those that should be saved, it would be well to inquire seriously into the cause. Indeed, there must be a cause, for that is not the condition of the normal church. Why did not things come to a standstill with those early disciples as they so often do with us? Twice we read in the same chapter that they "continued steadfastly." That was the secret of the success of that great revival period, and of every other revival period since that day. They kept right on at work after the "big meeting" was over. They "continued steadfastly" to go, to preach, to teach, to pray, and to do the will of their Lord and Master. The fire of Pentecost was still burning in their hearts; there were still others to be saved; the command of their Lord was still in force: "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to the whole creation." The fact that God had rewarded their service in one instance was proof positive that He would continue to do so. Have we not the same reasons for *continuing steadfastly* as did these disciples of old? The fire of Pentecost ought to be burning in our bosoms, and it will burn there if we seek for a filling of the Spirit and will follow His leading; there are yet many to be saved, and they are perishing for the Gospel; the command of Jesus is in full force to-day; but the trouble is we think of it as applying to

the missionary and the heathen when it applies with equal force to us and our unsaved friend and neighbour. And, further, we need to know that God stands just as ready to bless now as He did in apostolic times. "Behold the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither is His ear heavy that it cannot hear."

What is a church? Before we go further in the discussion of the normal church let us note the use of the word *church* in the New Testament. Perhaps no word in religious literature has such a variety of uses as the word *church*. Briefly speaking, there are but two uses of this term in the Word of God. There are a few instances where the word is used in its largest significance, as in Col. i. 18, "And He is the head of the body, the church"; also, as in Heb. xii. 23, "The general assembly and church of the first-born who are enrolled in heaven"; here the word is used to indicate the whole body of believers of all times and ages, in heaven and on earth. It is sometimes called the universal invisible church. As yet, it is only an ideal assembly without organization or authority, having received no promise or command from the Lord Jesus, and is, therefore, impotent in the sense of being a factor in the extension of Christ's kingdom on earth. The most common use of the word in the New Testament is with reference to the *local church*, which is composed of a smaller number of believers who have united

themselves according to the teaching of Christ and the apostles for the purpose of carrying out the will of their Lord, namely, the establishment of His kingdom in themselves and in the world. This is the body that can do things, because it has received the commands, promises, and authority of our Lord Jesus Christ and is, therefore, the most powerful body on earth for the propagation of truth and for the establishment of a reign of righteousness. The local church was the institution founded by Christ, and which has grown and multiplied from that day to this, and will continue to do so until our Lord's return to earth.

What constitutes a local church? Is it simply a body of Christian believers organized for religious worship and service? Not by any means. Such an organization is good as far as it goes, but it does not go far enough to be in fact a church. To sum up briefly, a New Testament church must be: (1) founded solely upon the Scriptures; (2) composed of a regenerate membership; (3) its members must be believers who have been baptized upon a profession of personal faith in Christ; (4) it must recognize and observe the ordinances as divinely appointed, not only as to their significance but as to the order in which they shall be observed—baptism preceding the Lord's Supper; (5) it must recognize the right of the individual to worship God according to the dictates of conscience; (6) there must be a sepa-

ration of church and state; (7) it must recognize responsibility to Christ; (8) it must seek the will of Christ in all things so far as revealed in His Word and by His Holy Spirit.

Thus, we see, *the normal church is founded in truth*. It has been begotten by the "Word of God, which liveth and abideth forever." This is the one element that differentiates a church from all other organizations, namely, that it has been brought into being through the will of God and by the power of His eternal truth. Truth has in it life; life must have in it the power of growth; a church must, therefore, grow because it has in it the "word of life" and the "spirit of life." There is but one alternative; if a church does not grow it must die. It is a law that whatever has life must grow if it is to maintain that life. Through the operation of "the law of the Spirit of life" the church has power to reproduce itself. Therefore, the church must recognize that power which is immanent in her body and must seek that development which is in harmony with the divine will. Let us see what Paul says of this normal growth in Eph. iv. 11-17: "And He gave some to be apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, unto the work of ministering, unto the building up of the body of Christ: till we all attain unto the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God,

unto a full grown man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ: that we may be no longer children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, in craftiness after the wiles of error; but speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him, who is the head, even Christ; from whom all the body fitly framed and knit together through that which every joint supplieth, according to the working in due measure of each several part, maketh the increase of the body unto the building up of itself in love."

In the reading of this passage these facts are patent: (1) Christ is the head of the church; (2) the church which constitutes His body is fitly joined and compacted together through the unity of its individual members; (3) through the coöperation of these members, including the spiritual leaders, there is a growth which fosters an increase of that body, or church, unto the building up of itself in love. The normal church, then, is a unit with every integral part supplied; growing, developing, perfecting itself in love; it is sufficient within itself to fulfill its mission in the world, and to maintain its own existence by an increase of its own body from time to time without the intervention of outside agencies. With this conception of a church there is no place left for the bringing in of the outside factor to be used in the development and mainte-

nance of the local church. Only when the local body is weak and insufficient to cope with the situation is there need for assistance from without. And when such aid is needed, as it frequently is with our weak churches, let us be sure that the evangelists and helpers are those whom the churches have recognized and authorized to do such work, rather than have it done by whoever happens to come along. There can be no safe evangelism apart from the churches.

The normal church, therefore, must grow of itself if it is to live and fulfill its mission. As long as it depends on outside assistance for development it will remain one-sided and dwarfed. Many a church has remained a dwarf all its life because of too much assistance. I wonder how a dwarf church and a dwarf Christian look in the eyes of God? Can He be pleased with them? A dwarf may be interesting as a freak but it is of little practical value. People may look at it through curiosity but such a creature does not excite any admiration—rather pity or contempt. The dwarf has failed of its mission in life, and so has the church which does not increase in numbers and spiritual power. The words of Dr. G. Campbell Morgan come with great force at this point: "No church ought to be allowed to exist that has not added to its membership by confession of faith. If a church is existing only by letters of transfer, it is time the doors were closed,

and 'Ichabod, the glory of the Lord has departed' was inscribed across them."

The normal church is evangelistic. This condition can be fostered and maintained only by the coöperation of divine and human agencies. We must strive to preserve our equilibrium at this point for it is very easy to stumble in one direction or the other. We may think that God will do everything without effort on our part. On the other hand, we may think our own work will do it all. (Evangelism is primarily the work of God and secondarily the work of man. We must recognize that both the divine and human elements are necessary in all Christian service or we shall fail. People are saved not merely because we have preached, prayed, planned and persuaded, but because God has wrought upon their hearts through His regenerating power. "Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." A child of God is "created" in Christ Jesus and not *made* through reformation, education, or resolution. This truth we must thoroughly fix in our minds, then we are prepared to see how God can use human agencies in the accomplishment of His work. God is the author of all life, power and energy. He operates in the realm of the material by means of laws which govern matter. He, likewise, works in the realm of the spiritual through spiritual laws. In the material world

God's laws are to be taken into account or man will suffer pain, or even death. In the spiritual world spiritual laws have to be reckoned with or we shall suffer loss and defeat, or even spiritual death. In the world of matter the laws have been found out through investigation. In the spiritual world they are revealed in the Word and by the Spirit. It is, therefore, our privilege and duty to know the will of God that we may place ourselves in harmony with Him and His laws in order that we may realize His power in our life and work. "The only church which is truly evangelistic," says Dr. G. Campbell Morgan, "is the church which realizes within her own borders all the will of her Lord and Master Jesus Christ."

The fact that the Divine Will is not recognized and honoured is a cause of much spiritual deadness in many churches. Some are wondering: Why can't we grow as other churches are doing? Why is there not evidence of saving power here as elsewhere? Search deep enough, my brother, my sister, and you will find the cause; and nine times out of ten you will find the greatest hindering cause right in your own heart. "Thou art the man;" and if you will turn from your sin, the chief part of which may be indifference, and seek the living God, a channel of blessing will be opened up between your soul and God and out from your life will flow unmeasured blessings to

others. His promise stands sure: "He that believeth on Me, as the Scripture hath said, from within him shall flow rivers of living water" (John vii. 38).

Many churches are barren of fruit because of sins which they are harbouring within their borders. Some are proud and self-complacent; others tolerate social evils; some are out of harmony with the pastor, perhaps, because he has preached too plain; again, some churches think more of dignity than of spiritual life, they wish to appear well before men rather than before God; others are shorn of their power because they spurn the poor and do not desire their presence in the house of God. Nothing could be more foreign to the spirit of Jesus who gave as one of the credentials of His divinity: "The poor have the Gospel preached to them." Let the churches go to work and carry out their rubbish-heaps of sin and worldliness and soon the song of the Lord will begin in their souls. Let them go forth into the highways and hedges and bring in the poor, the distressed, and the helpless and their joy shall be made full. The highest joy is known only to those who do the will of their Lord.

The church and its pastor constitute the evangelizing force in the community—in the world. They cannot evade their responsibility to the unsaved anywhere and yet be well-pleasing to their Lord. We must have the missionary

spirit, for that was the spirit of Him who said: "Go out into the highways and hedges and constrain them to come in." "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to the whole creation." "For the Son of man came to seek and to save that which was lost." "If this was the mission of Christ, the Head of the church," says Dr. L. R. Scarborough, "then certainly the main business of the great spiritual body of Jesus Christ is to win men, and to train men to win men. No preacher and no church can be most like Jesus and not win souls. Every preacher and every church is most like Jesus while winning a soul to salvation."

But before a church can be indeed a normal church the *individual members must do their part*. Too long have the members allowed themselves to hold back and let the chief part of the burden fall upon the pastor, or perhaps upon the pastor and a few faithful ones. It is not just that the burden should be so unequally distributed. It is not right that Christian people should have one standard of living and service for themselves and another for the minister. We all condemn the error into which society has fallen in erecting a double standard of morality—one for men and one for women. The Word of God teaches us that there should be but one standard—a pure life for both men and women. But have not Christian people generally made a grievous mis-

take in having one standard of religion for themselves and one for the ministry? They have a very high standard for the minister, and often a very low one for themselves. The first is right but the second is wrong. When Christian people come to the point where they are willing to do and be what they expect the minister to do and be—to live righteously, give generously, serve faithfully, pray earnestly, study diligently, witness gladly, seek to win souls continually—then indeed will God's kingdom have come and His will be done on earth as in heaven.

The normal church is a serving church. No church has a right to exist if it does not serve the community in which it is located. What does your church mean to the people about you? It must do something more than hold its services and keep the doors of its building open at stated times for worship. It should be a *positive force for righteousness*. Unless a church is making itself felt as a power in the moral and spiritual uplifting of the people who are under its influence it is making a sad failure. A church is not merely a guide-post along life's highway pointing out the right path, but is a moving army, fighting sin and error, rescuing the fallen, defending the weak, and enlisting new recruits in the army of King Jesus. The church must stand four square to every wind that blows. It must stand for truth and righteousness not only in the

lives of its members but in the community, the state, the country, the world. It should be in the forefront of every real reform movement which is for the good of mankind. The impotency of our churches in the past to do any effective work of reform has been enough to excite contempt in the eyes of the world as it has done in many quarters. The world could formerly say to us: "Yes, you can preach and sing and pray but you can't do anything to stay the onward course of evil." But they cannot say that to us now. The churches of our land are awaking to their duty and the forces of evil now see that their most powerful antagonists are the churches of Jesus Christ. In proportion as we fight the wrong will we be successful in extending the kingdom of God on earth. "The church is to be aggressive in capturing men, fighting against wrong, urging everywhere and always the claims of Jesus Christ. And this can she only be as within her borders there is realized the purposes of God."

The normal church must *minister to the needs of the physical man*. This we must do if we would follow the example of Jesus "who went about doing good." It is pertinent to ask: Have not Protestant churches lost a great deal by their failure to give more attention to man's physical needs? Too long have the churches of Christ limited their sphere and function to the

spiritual and moral. This service we ought to have done and not to have left the other undone. If anything is clear from the example and teaching of Jesus it is that His churches are to care for the sick, the poor, and the distressed, as well as for the sin-cursed and lost. God gave man this body as a temple of the soul. To minister to the physical man is often the best means of ministering to the spiritual man. The Word is full of teaching on this subject, and clearly shows the emptiness of a religious profession in which the spirit of charity is lacking: "If a brother or sister be naked or in lack of daily food, and one of you say unto them, Go in peace, be ye warmed and filled; and yet ye give them not the things needful to the body; what doth it profit?" (James ii. 15-16).

Does this mean that every church is to be an institutional church? Not necessarily. But let us thank God for the institutional churches we have and the excellent work they are doing. Their example is helping other churches to see their *duty to the whole man*. We need to return more to the New Testament order of things. So important did the apostolic church at Jerusalem consider the work of ministering to the poor that they appointed seven deacons for that particular service. The word *deacon* means *one who serves*, and the chief part of his service was for the relief of the poor and needy.

Have we not gotten somewhat away from the original design of the office? The whole church is to be a serving church with the deacons as leaders in this particular part of the work. "If any man serve Me, him will the Father honour." So with the church that seeks to honour God in every possible way. The spirit of the true evangel is the spirit of service to the whole man.

The normal church will recognize her sources of power. One of these are the young men within her ranks who, by virtue of their natural endowments, religious training, and other personal qualifications, are fitted for the work of the ministry. Of course we are aware of the fact that no man, however well qualified by nature, is eligible to the work of the ministry unless God has called him. But it is the duty of God's people to prepare the way for such a call in those whom they think capable, by training, prayer, encouragement, and a sympathetic interest. Too long have we stood aloof from those whom we thought to be good ministerial prospects and just "let the Lord do the work," forgetting that the Lord works through means and agencies in this respect as in others. Many a person, no doubt, would never have been led to Christ except through the direct personal appeal of some other godly person. So many a preacher, perhaps, would have never entered

the ministry but for the kindly interest of some one in whom they greatly confided. And as many, no doubt, have remained out of the kingdom many years, and it may be forever, because of the neglect of some one to do his duty, so it is likely that many a man who should have preached the Gospel has remained out of the ministry until almost middle life, and perhaps forever. It is as much our duty to lead young men into the ministry and urge their thorough preparation for it as it is to lead people to acceptance of Christ and active service. To be instrumental in leading one young man into the ministry may be the means of multiplying yourself many times as a soul-winner.

The normal church must have a more exalted conception of the ministry before she can be highly successful in recruiting the ranks of the ministry with the very best men. From every direction comes the cry for *more men in the ministry*. Why this dearth of ministers? Are not our churches largely responsible? Many Christian people have wrong conceptions of the ministry. They place it on a par with the professions and other callings and instead of heeding the Scriptural injunction with reference to ministers: "Esteem them exceedingly highly in love for their work's sake," they rather minimize and belittle the office. Let us rather lead

young men to see that it is the highest of all callings and that no greater opportunity for doing good and receiving good is open to mortal man than that afforded through the Christian ministry. Let us remember that the world is bidding for our young men of brilliant parts to enter its various vocations by holding up alluring inducements and glowing prospects of good fortune. While we rejoice because of the many opportunities for the young men of to-day, let us bear in mind that nothing brings so great returns for the outlay of time, talent, strength of mind and body, either in time or eternity, as the work of preaching the Gospel. There are many parents who, although they have great respect for the ministry, would just a "little rather" their sons would not enter the ministry. I fear there is something wrong with the heart of that parent who would not rejoice because of the fact that a son entertained serious thoughts of the ministry. We ought to covet the best gifts for our children and no greater blessing can come to any Christian young man than that which comes in response to the call of God to become a bearer of the glad tidings of salvation to a lost world.

Can a standard of normal growth be attained?

The fact that there are some churches in our land where there is a continuous, steady, healthy growth is proof that such a condition is not im-

possible. While we may never reach our ideal yet we should strive towards it. A normal church is one that grows according to an established law or principle. The ideal is furnished us in the Scriptures together with the formula by which the ideal is attained: "If ye abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ask whatsoever ye will, and it shall be done unto you. Herein is My Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; and so shall ye be My disciples."

The matter is largely in the pastor's hands. If he would strive towards the standard of a normal church-growth, as every true minister of Jesus Christ must do, then let him *preach to win souls*. Lectures, entertainments, dissertations on philosophy, and gems of oratory must not take the place of the gospel message if he would *make the regular services evangelistic*. Let him supplement his preaching by *personal work* at the house of worship, in the home, in the stores, in the shops, on the street, that he may "by all means save some." He should *train his people* to do personal work that there may be a revival, not for a few days only, but throughout the year. It is his privilege to *instruct the people* in the things of God, and out of the mines of Scriptural truth it should be his delight to bring forth treasures new and old. In *prayer and thought* let him live close to God and bear up with him his people to a throne of grace that they may have

fresh visions of God's glory. He as no one else can bring before the minds of his people *the world's needs* and thus lead them to a more consecrated life. He can by wisdom and perseverance *secure the coöperation of his church* and lead its members into various lines of Christian activity. That pastor who seeks the *leading of the Holy Spirit* and keeps a *firm hold on God by faith* has all the promises of God vouchsafed unto him, therefore, let him never fear. "Wherefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not vain in the Lord" (1 Cor. xv. 58).

V

Pastoral Leadership in Evangelism

For of all the errors that have wrought ruin to the church none has been more fatal than the tacit admission that the work of the minister is a thing separate from the work of the evangelist.—*W. J. Dawson.*

The pastor must never cease to urge soul-winning, until he gets his people fired with the responsibility of being Andrews and Philips. Around every church there are opportunities. Lost people everywhere; we walk with them and talk with them every day. It is ours, therefore, to show a personal interest in their soul's salvation.—*Len G. Broughton.*

I wish to say here what I have elsewhere hinted, that the man to preach in those services is the pastor himself. While much can be said of the wisdom of employing evangelists in special cases, the purpose of this book is to help every pastor to become his own evangelist. This is the crying need of the Church to-day. This duty must not be laid upon another. Any man can move men to God, when he is himself moved of God. It is not in human nature to stand the pleading of a breaking heart. I therefore say to every pastor, "Do your own preaching." If you feel the need of the help of your brethren, get it in some ministerial retreat. But when it comes to the revival service, throw your whole soul into it and depend upon God and your church for help. Good results have doubtless come from meetings in which several pastors have preached on succeeding nights, but careful and long continued observation has convinced us that more is lost than is gained by sharing responsibility with others.—*Charles L. Goodell.*

The church seems to be waiting for a leader of the New Evangelism, and every now and then some one appears and is hailed as our Moses, but he does not lead us into the land of promise. . . . The pastor is the evangelist of his parish. Every minister should be an evangelist. The church is crying aloud for men who are red-hot with zeal to save souls.

—*J. F. Carson.*

V

PASTORAL LEADERSHIP IN EVANGELISM

*P*ASTORS *must become the leaders in evangelistic work.* Therefore, it is an excellent plan for a church and its pastor to hold their own special meetings. This is the best means of developing pastoral leadership. And a meeting of this kind is most likely to foster the spirit of evangelism that will be effectual and abiding. There are times, of course, when a church and pastor may with great profit be aided by another pastor or a good evangelist; but in order that Christian people may be led to a deeper and stronger conviction as to their obligation to God and to a lost world—that they may be made to realize that above all things else soul-winning is the real business of the churches—the pastors must become the leaders in all evangelistic movements among the churches. Some strong arguments can be made in favour of securing outside ministers to aid in revival services, and sometimes that is the wise course to pursue, but as a rule it is without question better for a pastor and people to do this work themselves under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. If any one doubts

this let him try the plan thoroughly and the experience will be sufficient to convince him as to the wisdom of such an effort.

There are *difficulties*, to be sure, but this is true of any great and important work. Is it the manly thing in us to hunt for easy ways of doing the Lord's work? We are prone to move along lines of least resistance; but is it right? Preachers generally are not hurt with hard work, else why should life insurance companies regard them as "good risks"? The thing that is hurting ministers most is: they are allowing themselves to be dominated by the "tyranny of non-essentials," so that they are hindered from doing the things that are worth while. Many a pastor is falling short of the highest ends in the ministry because he cannot keep on at his work when he knows that sisters Brown and Smith are fussing and fuming because he does not come around a little oftener to spend an afternoon listening to their gossip; or because he fears he will not appear public spirited he becomes president or secretary of an endless number of societies, clubs and circles, so that the greater part of his valuable time is spent circling around with things which are of no moment; or because he is anxious to appear popular, he accepts every invitation to make speeches and addresses and attend all important functions in the community; all of these make such a draft upon his time and energies

that it is impossible for him to do much of the real work which he is called to do.

The question of *securing the coöperation of the people* is an easy matter if the pastor is wise and tactful. Of course, the scolding preacher is likely to fail at this point for he is usually not very tactful to begin with. If scolding be his habit, let him leave off the practice for at least six months before he attempts to present the matter to his people, else he will fail. Then if he does succeed in leading them in a revival effort it would be well for him not to scold any for at least six months afterwards for fear of spoiling all the good he has done. Then perhaps by that time his habit will be broken and he will not only be a happier and better man but his people will love him more and his power to lead them will be multiplied many fold. The habitually scolding preacher who delights more in beating the sheep than in feeding them will soon find himself shut up in a very small corner of the Lord's kingdom. He is unfit to lead the flock of God unless he leads them out into the green pastures and beside the still waters where they are nourished and cared for as the Great Shepherd would have him do. I am frank to say that if I were a layman I would rebel against sitting under the preaching of a habitually scolding pastor.

Let the pastor who would lead his people in a

special revival effort first *call his leading brethren together* and lay his plan before them. There may not be the heartiest accord at once for they have not been accustomed to doing things that way. At this point the pastor has a splendid opportunity to reveal the spirit of Jesus. Let him be bold yet humble ; persistent yet patient ; earnest, yet self-controlled ; and when they once see that he is deeply in earnest they will be ready to join him in the undertaking. There may be some who will oppose the idea of a pastor holding his own meeting, but these are not the ones who would be of much assistance even if he should conduct the meeting their way. Let him move calmly on, strengthened by the prayers and coöperation of those who truly love the Lord, and sustained by the consciousness of knowing he is following the Spirit's leading.

The task of *making additional sermons* is a bugbear to some. But the pastor who is wise, alert and industrious will make provision for that all along during the year if he knows he is to preach during the revival season in his own church. The preacher who spends all his time preparing his two sermons for the following Sunday is unwise, to say the least. He who does so usually lives "from hand to mouth" and never has anything ahead. The wise pastor is an alert student whose powers of mind are ever active. He studies his Bible systematically and

preserves the results. He will keep a list of subjects and texts with outlines and notes so that the work of making a new sermon will be an easy matter. He will read good books, gather clippings, observe what is going on in the world about him so that when it comes to the work of making a few extra sermons he will have little difficulty but will rather delight in the exercise. And with the Holy Spirit to lead him he need never fear.

How can the pastor do any personal work? He can do some but it is not necessary that he do it all. People have been letting the preachers do most of the personal work and thereby have robbed themselves of the greatest blessings. This is where the people can aid the pastor most effectively. Now they are not likely to do much of this work if there are several preachers around to do it. But when there is no one to do it but their pastor and he has trained them how, they can help him greatly. This is one of the great blessings that comes to a church when a pastor conducts the revival: the people are stimulated to do personal work. And for this reason alone the effort is worth while.

It is not needful that we dwell upon the difficulties. Good common sense, industry and the grace of God will go a long way towards overcoming difficulties. Let us not be among those who say: "There is a lion without" and seek to

justify our inactivity with that excuse. Has not Christ promised: "Lo, I am with you alway"? And has not this one fact alone explained all the triumphs of the Gospel from the day of Pentecost till now? The man who can say: "I can do all things in Him that strengtheneth me" has won the victory already.

Let us think rather of the advantages gained by pastor and people in coöperation in evangelistic work. The benefits so far outweigh the difficulties that by thinking of the former the latter sinks into insignificance.

In the first place, *it gives the pastor a better hold on his people.* As a rule, it is hard to make people think that they are a part of the meeting, or that they are sharers in the work of soul-winning in any direct sense. You can tell them so but somehow they do not seem to believe it and hence do not act upon your suggestion. As a rule they seem to feel that all that needs to be done can be done by the pastor and the visiting preacher, and about all they will do is to sit down and watch the preachers perform. But when they are made to feel that they are a part of the meeting, and by no means a small part either, that they and the pastor are really co-workers for the Lord, there springs up a new relationship between the pastor and his people. They learn to sympathize with him, pray for him, work with him, listen to him in a way they

never have before. The meeting becomes to them a time of crisis in which something must be done or the cause of Christ will suffer, souls will be lost and they themselves become a reproach to the name of Christ. They become anxious as to their own relation to God, as to how they may be best fitted for service, and as to how their neighbours, friends and loved ones may be won to Christ. They are looking to God as the source of all blessing and to their pastor as the one who speaks the oracles of God. If the pastor's leading is wise and tactful, they are inspired with a new confidence in him, and thus he has gained a vantage ground for more effective work among them.

The pastor not only gets a better hold on the people of his own church, but he has an opportunity to *widen his influence throughout the whole community*. This is true, not only with members of other religious bodies, but especially with the unsaved and non-churchgoing people. It is a well-known fact that in every community there are some unbelievers, and church-members, too, who rarely attend religious service except during a revival meeting. If a visiting brother is conducting the meeting, as soon as he is gone they are gone too, and that is the last you see of them until the next revival, when the process is repeated. But when the pastor has led in the services this is not so likely to be the case.

When they have listened to the pastor through a series of meetings there is formed a bond of interest between him and them so that they are likely to continue to attend the regular services and he has a chance to reach and hold them for good.

It is a saving of time and energy. When a pastor and a church are going to hold their own meeting they know exactly how to plan and what to plan for. They can suit their own time and convenience, and can proceed with their preparation in a more intelligent manner. If another brother is going to assist them, too frequently they do not plan at all, or if they do, they run the risk of having all their plans overturned at his coming, and all have to set themselves to work to adjust themselves to a condition wholly different from that expected.

Then, too, the visiting preacher must lose some valuable time getting acquainted with people and conditions before he can labour to advantage. He does not know how or where to strike and the result is that he aims at nothing, hits nothing, and accomplishes nothing for a few days at least. His aimless efforts are like those of the crazy man who was found out in the woods shooting off a gun. On being approached and asked why he was doing so much shooting he said: "Well, it keeps me company, it scares off the devils, and then I might hit a stray coon."

There is too much random preaching in many of our revivals. I remember while aiding another pastor once to have preached on decision, urging with all the energy of my soul the acceptance of Christ only to learn at the close of the service that there was not an unsaved person in the house so far as was known. But when the pastor is doing the preaching he knows conditions better, can preach more directly, and labour more intelligently than can an entire stranger.

There is, also, much time and energy lost by the people. They do not feel the direct responsibility when an outside minister is assisting as when the pastor is leading. Of course, they ought to feel this responsibility, but the fact is they do not. We must face facts as they are and not presume that they are otherwise. Even the pastor himself finds it harder to feel that keen interest in the salvation of the lost when he is looking to another man to be the prime factor in the work. He finds that his interest is stimulated when he is looking to God alone for direction and power and is relying upon prayers, sympathy and hearty support of his brethren. They are not so likely to waste time in mere social intercourse both at the house of worship and in their homes in their rounds of entertaining "the preachers" as is so often the case, especially in our towns and country churches. That is all very delightful, but we must be on our guard at this

point lest the social absorb and overshadow the spiritual, and thus the church and the community be robbed of the highest blessing. Under such circumstances there is not enough heart-searching in prayer; not enough soul-travail which must necessarily characterize a real spiritual revival. But when pastor and people go hand in hand into a meeting realizing that great interests are at stake they do not feel like wasting time on non-essentials but get right down to business—the Lord's business—at once.

It strengthens the pastor and his people. Of course, it does people good to listen to a series of sermons that are edifying and inspiring, but that is not always the thing they most need. Some people are all but preached to death now. They have been fed until they are overfed and still they think of nothing but being fed. They have been absorbing the Gospel like a sponge for so long that they seem to think that the Gospel is for nobody else. They need to be put to work imparting their blessings to others. This will mean great strength to them as individuals and to the church. To know that God is using them and blessing their efforts will strengthen their courage, enlarge their faith, and increase their usefulness in every way, and, also, inspire them to undertake greater things for God.

Such an experience is of unmeasured value to the pastor. To observe this increased interest

on the part of his people, to see them rallying to his support, to be conscious of a closer touch with them and with God, to witness the transforming power of the Holy Spirit manifested in the lives of the unsaved—all these, in a peculiar manner, impart strength to the life and character of the pastor, giving him a feeling of mastery so necessary in leadership which if possessed in humility and exercised in wisdom will, under God, mean for him all but infinite possibilities in the work of the Master.

It is easier to continue evangelistic work. Every one knows that as a rule there is a lull in the revival spirit after the revival season is over. One reason is because it is expected. Christians do not expect conversions and sinners do not expect to be converted. They think: the evangelist is gone, the singer is gone, the big platform is removed, the choir is not one-fourth as large, the big crowds have vanished, all the interest and enthusiasm have died away, and there is nothing left but just the pastor, a few straggling members of the choir, an irregular congregation—in fact there is nothing left by which a man could be converted. He forgets that religion is a spiritual matter without any dependence whatever upon outward forms and conditions and that he can be saved just as easily in the regular services as in a great revival. And this is more likely to be the case when pastor

and people have coöperated in the special meetings. After they are over the people can see that it is the same preacher, the same kind of sermons, the same choir, the same congregations and that there is no reason why there should not be conversions in the regular services as in the revival. Therefore we may expect the spirit of revival to continue if the pastor and people continue to work and pray.

The results are more lasting. If only during a protracted meeting we have joy and blessing we are of all men most miserable. Too many revivals do not revive. They are like the bottle of soda-pop—effervesce until there is nothing left. There was a great stir and noise, big crowds, large calculations, but when things cooled down there was not very much left. To sum it all up, the fruits were not abiding. But a revival that is held by pastor and people is not likely to be of the effervescent sort. It is true, they may not seem to be “arousing the natives” but the work will be more lasting. The tendency is to an increase of the revival spirit which shall manifest itself in every department of the church’s life; a spirit that shall last not for a few days only but that shall continue on indefinitely. What we need in our churches—to use the words of Dr. A. J. Francis—is “not a spurt of evangelism but the spirit of evangelism.” This spirit of evangelism can never be fostered and

maintained until pastors and churches join hand to hand and heart to heart in the great task of saving those who are out of Christ.

The pastor is in a better position to hold, train and indoctrinate the new converts. There is a closer tie of affection between him and them if they confessed Christ under his ministry directly. There is much to be done after a meeting closes and if the pastor has held the mastery all the while he is in a better position to do the work of training, which after all is the most difficult, with greater ease and effectiveness than if he had turned the mastery over to some one else for a time and then had to resume it under difficulties.

Pastors should be the leaders in all evangelistic movements; and why should they not be such in their own churches? Does the lawyer accept his client's case, work it up and then get another lawyer to argue it for him? Does the physician accept the care of his patients and then call in another to treat them for him? True, they each may call in assistance in cases of emergency but ordinarily the lawyer and the doctor attend to their own cases and no one thinks it presumption for them to do so, for that is their business. It seems to me the same rule holds good in the case of the pastor. Should he accept the care of a church with the expectation of calling in some one else to do the chief part

of the work of saving the lost when that is the very purpose for which he and the church are called of God to fulfill? And should it be thought presumption on his part to attempt to lead his people in an evangelistic effort? Yet some church-members are narrow enough to think so and some preachers are cowardly enough to allow the faultfinding members of their flocks to keep them from making an effort at pastoral leadership in evangelism. Some people seem to have been born in the "objective case." Some church-members need a little more of the grace of God in their hearts and some pastors need a little more of "holy boldness."

There are conditions which make it imperative for the pastor to call in another minister to aid in special meetings. Much might be said in favour of this method of evangelistic work if this were the point that needed emphasis. We are likely to do enough of this kind of work without any suggestions. It is for pastoral leadership that we are contending because that is most needed. However, I never expect to come to the point in my ministry where I shall not sometimes have the aid of a brother minister in special meetings. I also sincerely hope that I shall never come to the point of shirking my duty by calling in aid when it is not needed. Of course, the people will need a change in preachers and preaching but it is not always wise to make

that change at the time of the revival season. A discriminating pastor and an earnest people can determine the wiser course in this matter through prayer and brotherly conferences.

But let it be remembered that *the best sort of revival* some churches ever had has been one in which another minister had been engaged to assist and could not come; and *when the people and their pastor have gone into the revival* with fear and trembling only to find that God was just as ready to use them for His glory as He was some other man several hundred miles away. Truly, have some of the best things in the world been found out by accident! Therefore, let the pastor and his church first seriously consider as to whether outside aid is really needed before they call for it.

This question, however, rarely comes up for consideration with churches and pastors when contemplating a series of revival services, for the first question usually is: "Whom shall we get to carry on the revival for us?" The idea of entering into the work themselves with the Lord to help them seems to be entirely foreign to their minds. They pray: "Lord, send us the right man," but never: "Here am I, send me." Their idea is to have souls saved and the interests of the kingdom built up, also, that they must have some one who knows how to do this work for them while they just come to the meetings, have

a good time and feel no care or responsibility beyond that of getting a little good out of the meetings for themselves. Away with idea of doing the Lord's work by proxy! Dr. W. J. Dawson has rightly said: "We have within our churches at the present time, imperfect as they are, a force sufficient for the Christian conquest of the world." It is this latent force that needs to be aroused and put to use. But before this can be accomplished pastors must be thoroughly aroused. Then churches will become aroused, and the greatest revival era known in the world's history will be manifestly present.

VI

The Revival in Preparation

There are laws higher than natural which control spiritual seasons.—*H. C. Mabie.*

Revivals, if they are genuine, do not always come the moment you whistle for them. Try and whistle for the wind, and see if it will come. The great rain was given in answer to Elijah's prayer ; but not even the first time he prayed, and we must pray again, and again, and again, and at last the cloud will appear, the showers out of the cloud. Wait a while, work on, plod on, plead on, and in due time the blessing will be given.

—*C. H. Spurgeon.*

The one essential condition of every revival is an atmosphere which most powerfully impresses men with the importance of becoming Christians, most powerfully constrains them to this end, and at the same time makes it easier than it ordinarily would be for them to make their decision for God. The secret of every true revival is the creation of this atmosphere.

—*W. E. Beiderwolf.*

Doubtless one of the great secrets of the unsatisfactoriness and superficiality and unreality of many of our modern so-called revivals, is that more dependence is put upon man's machinery than upon God's power, sought and obtained by earnest, persistent, believing prayer. We live in a day characterized by the multiplication of man's machinery, and the diminution of God's power. The great cry of our day is work, work, work, new organizations, new methods, new machinery ; the great need of our day is prayer.—*R. A. Torrey.*

The true revival will not be worked up by machinery, but simply by God's people waiting as the disciples waited in the upper room, until He comes and works His purpose in their hearts, so that men will confess Christ because they cannot help it—because of the inworking power that they cannot control.

—*Len G. Broughton.*

VI

THE REVIVAL IN PREPARATION

*P*REPARATION is necessary in any good work. This is preëminently true in a successful revival. The failure in many a revival effort may be traced to a lack of preparation. There is no such thing as a spontaneous revival if by that term we mean that a revival came into being without any preparation. Even where there may have been evidences of such a revival there will be found a cause; and it is usually due to the fact that some earnest person, or persons, prayed for and looked for the coming of the Lord with power in the hearts of the people. Always has the revival come in response to preparation on the part of some one. And what better preparation could be made than to pray for and expect a revival?

INWARD PREPARATION

Inward preparation is the first step in the direction of a true revival. Our first thought usually is to do something in an external way when the truth is we must first be something inwardly. Our being what we ought to be

before God avails far more than our *doing* what we can do. The Psalmist was conscious of this great truth when he said: "For Thou delightest not in sacrifices; else would I give it: Thou hast not pleasure in burnt offering. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise." First, let us be what God would have us be, then we shall be prepared to do what God would have us do. The question is not so much: How shall we prepare for a revival? as: How shall we be prepared for a revival?

THE NECESSITY OF PRAYER

The revival must begin in the hearts of God's people. We must, therefore, seek that inward preparation which comes through prayer.

"Prayer is the Christian's vital breath,
The Christian's native air."

Many a Christian is starving and dwarfing the soul because of the lack of prayer. Prayer is God's appointed means for reviving the spirits of His people. Our souls need reviving because of our sins, our neglect, our weakness, our failures, and our temptations; and because we need a fresh supply of grace that we may take up our tasks more zealously and pursue them more patiently. Therefore, let us exalt

prayer to its proper place in our lives. Let us *pray much in secret* for we have the promise: "And thy Father who seeth in secret shall recompense thee." Let us make our prayer-meetings what the name implies: *meetings especially for prayer*. "For where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them." Let us *pray much in the home*. If there be a time-honoured custom that needs reviving in this day of business, rush, and hurry it is that of gathering the members of the home together for prayer. Gather groups of families together in homes from time to time and *hold cottage prayer-meetings*. Families may be reached in this way that cannot be reached in any other. "Again I say unto you, that if two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done of My Father who is in heaven."

There never was a revival without prayer. The revival at Pentecost came in answer to prayer, likewise, every other revival since that day. There might be a revival without preaching, singing, or advertising, but there never could be a revival without praying. For what shall we pray? For what did Isaiah pray before entering upon his great work? *for inward cleansing*, just as we must. Conscious of his sin he cried unto Jehovah: "Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean

lips. . . . Then flew one of the seraphim unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar : and he touched my mouth with it, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips, and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin is forgiven." All this took place before his response to Jehovah's call with those words of self-surrender and consecration : " Here am I ; send me " (Isa. vi. 8).

We must pray for that inward renewing as did the returning exiles who felt the need of a stronger power to nerve them for their task in reëstablishing themselves in their land after many years of captivity : " Wilt Thou not quicken us again, that Thy people may rejoice in Thee ? " (Ps. lxxxv. 6). From God proceeds all reviving power. " Let us therefore draw near with boldness unto the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy, and find grace to help us in time of need."

We must pray for the guiding of the Holy Spirit. He is our advocate on earth. We are now living in that age in which the Holy Spirit is the great energizing, life-giving, transforming force in the world. The promise of Jesus to His disciples for all time is : " But ye shall receive power, when the Holy Spirit is come upon you " (Acts i. 8). *That power*, without which all effort to spread the kingdom of God is in vain, *is given in answer to prayer.* Says Jesus : " If ye then,

being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him?" (Luke xi. 13). He it is who "when He is come, will convince the world in respect of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment" (John xvi. 8). He it is whose power wrought upon the soul is so marvellous, permanent, and effectual that it is said to be a birth. "Except one be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." Therefore, one whose power is so essential to progress in the things of the kingdom must be recognized and his leading sought if we are to be successful in revival work.

A BIBLE-READING REVIVAL

Have you ever tried to hold *a Bible-reading revival*? The *result will reward the effort* many times over. If we want a Scriptural revival let us seek it by thoroughly saturating our minds with Scriptural truth. Too many modern revivals are almost entirely divorced from the Scriptures in spirit, method, and manner of preaching; the spirit is not so much for the glory of God as for the glory of man; the method is so entirely foreign to the New Testament practice and teaching, the preaching so evidently lacking in Biblical knowledge, that, were one of the apostles to wake up in a modern revival, going at full

blast, without a program in his hand, he would no doubt wonder what sort of a performance was going on; and were he told that it was a revival he would very likely venture the remark: "We never saw it on this fashion."

The best way to have a Scriptural revival is to *start the people to reading the Bible* along some definite line a few weeks beforehand. The pastor can arrange a series of readings along the line of the great doctrines: Sin; Redemption; Repentance; Faith; Regeneration; the Holy Spirit; the Church; the Ordinances; Prayer; Soul-winning; Missions; the Second Coming. These topics with some Scriptural references may be printed on a card and distributed. This will stimulate interest in a remarkable way and will make ready the minds of the people for the coming of the Lord with power.

Another excellent plan is to *make a thorough study of some book in the Bible*: Nehemiah; Isaiah; the Minor Prophets; Romans; Acts; Hebrews; James; or one of the Gospels. If a pastor becomes deeply interested in a study of this kind it will not be difficult to interest the people. The Bible-reading revival is not likely to be of the effervescent sort but will be rational, substantial, and abiding in its character and influence. The Bible-reading church is the one that has power with God and men, as we read of the Bereans: "Now these were more noble than those in

Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, examining the Scriptures daily, whether these things were so. Many of them therefore believed ; also of the Greek women of honourable estate, and of men, not a few." An intelligent, informed constituency will mean a power for our churches ; the lack of it will mean their ruin in this age in which the standard of thinking is rising more rapidly every day. Our people must learn and think or they shall fail.

REVIVAL SINGING

Singing is a very important part of evangelistic work. The work of preaching and singing are supplemental to each other. The one is a preparation for the other. An intelligent appreciation of the preaching is an aid to the song-message. In turn, the song-message is a preparation for the spoken message. By the singing of the Gospel the soul is put in tune for the hearing of it. The fallow ground of the barren soul is broken up by the share of song and is thus made ready for the sowing of the precious gospel seed which may spring forth and bear a glorious harvest unto eternal life.

The power of song has nowhere been more signally demonstrated, perhaps, than in the Welsh revival. That revival was distinctly characterized by prayer and song. Nothing reaches

and stirs the soul so much as a good song well sung. Therefore, it is essential that *a good collection of songs* be secured. There should be song-books in abundance. The songs should be learned by the choir and congregation. Everybody should be encouraged to sing. While it is advisable to have solos, duets, and quartets, after all, *congregational singing is of greatest importance*. Therefore, the congregational singing should be looked after with greatest care, and every reasonable means should be used to induce people to sing.

In the *choice of revival songs* discretion should be exercised. Some songs are of a very low order, approaching dangerously near the "rag-time" variety. These should be rejected at once. A good song is like a good coin—it has the right ring. Too much jingle and movement render a song undesirable. The words of a song should be intelligible and should convey a Scriptural truth. The music should be in keeping with the words. There is such a thing as a theme in a melody as there is in a discourse and the themes of the poem and the melody should agree. A song without sense is worthless.

There are also some very high-class songs, which are excellent in their way, but are unsuited for revival services. They are staid, stately, and stilted, and do not come down to the level of the people whom we are trying to reach. Many of

our best singers are anxious to use such songs as give an opportunity to display artistic talent; but after all, the highest art is to reach the heart, inspire the soul, and move the will to action. Much of the so-called classic music does not move people to accept the Lord Jesus Christ, or lead them to higher conceptions of Christian service. Let us, then, choose those songs which contain the heart of the Gospel and breathe the spirit of evangelistic fervour.

There is a "happy medium" which we may find in the selection of revival songs and that is to choose the best of the old and the new songs. Some people tire of the old hymns while others stand ready to reject the new ones. Sing the old songs as though they were new and the new as though they were old. Sing the new song over and over stanza by stanza until they can sing it well. People like to do the thing that they can do well. When they learn to sing well they will enjoy it.

One word must be said about *the invitation hymn*, not only because the hymn is important, but the time at which it is sung is more important still. In the first place, the hymn should be *a real invitation hymn and a familiar one*. The effect of the most fervent appeal from the preacher may be lost by an ill-timed hymn. And sometimes the effect of a good invitation hymn is ruined by the frantic gesticulations and

the senseless ejaculations of the preacher who has made the appeal, but who never knows when he has made it—or rather never finds a stopping-place when making it. The practice of clamouring away all during the invitation hymn is abominable. Which is worse: the unintelligible mutterings of the priest or the ravings of the “revivalist” during the invitation hymn? To my mind the latter is the more senseless and useless. People who act under such conditions usually act from impulse and not from conviction. Such “methods” are responsible for much of the riffraff that is gathered in at some of our meetings. Some of our preachers need to learn the meaning of the Apostle’s admonition: “But let all things be done decently and in order” (1 Cor. xiv. 40). Even a preacher has no right to disturb any part of a religious service. There is a law against it and a preacher should at least obey the law.

But what of the singers in a revival? Are they of the earth earthy? or is there heavenly melody in their hearts? A good voice is a good thing but it is not everything. The life counts for more than the voice. We would not think of tolerating a preacher in the pulpit whose life was avowedly worldly and sinful; how about the singer in the choir whose living is questionable? The preacher proclaims the message and the singer sings it. Should there be agreement between the message and the life of the one who

proclaims it? Certainly. Should there be a disparity in the song-message and the life of the one who sings it? Assuredly not. It is a sad mistake to ask those whose creed and practice are contrary to the spirit of Jesus to sing in our churches. For one to stand up and sing: "All to Jesus I surrender," when at the same time every one in the congregation knows that that person would not give up a single questionable practice for the sake of Christ or man, is a sacrilege. The world looks on and says: "Sham!" and it has a right to say it. The end of preaching and singing is the same; the spirit of Jesus, therefore, should rule the life of both preacher and singer.

The singers should be trained. If there be no leader in the church then seek the aid of some one who can do this work. It is better, however, to use the talent of the church when possible both as to leader and singers. It is repeated, intelligent effort that develops and trains. In the use of local talent we often discover qualities of voice and leadership never dreamed of before. We need to learn self-reliance in its best sense in all our work. In our singing let us remember that loudness is not an essential quality of good music; if so, then the calliope would take precedence over the best trained orchestra. Harmony and purity of tone are preferable to volume of sound.

In *revival singing* there should be *energy, spirit, life*, and with it all, deep *earnestness*; the *spirit of prayer* must pervade everything, even the choir. The choir should be the last place on earth where it would be easy to start a giggle or a titter, yet how often it is quite the reverse. Let us bear in mind continually that both preaching and singing have in view the one great end, namely: to lead people to a closer fellowship with God; and to move the hearts of the unsaved, either by means of imparted truth, or through an awakened conscience, to accept Jesus Christ as Lord. Therefore, the singers should realize the importance of their part of the service and should seek the same spiritual qualifications as are expected in the minister of Jesus Christ. A good band of well-trained singers are a mighty force in evangelistic work. May the Lord give us many of them!

PERSONAL VISITATION

Some time before the meeting is to begin it is well to *divide up the territory* in which the church is located and assign certain districts to workers. The character of this *canvass* can be determined by the pastor and his helpers. In some instances an accurate knowledge of the field is desired; then a religious census should be taken and the important facts recorded. In every case it is imperative that the names of persons, or families,

who have no church home, or who need assistance in spiritual things, be given to the pastor. He should always keep a list of the unsaved persons in the community. Likewise, all cases of destitution should be given to the pastor or deacons. In every city will be found those who are in need of food and clothing who are either too proud or too timid to make their needs known. And in many towns, and even in the country, we may be surprised to find those who are in need of the bare necessities of life. It is the duty of the local church to seek out and relieve such persons, or place them in charge of the local charity organization, if there be such. A campaign of house to house visitation will be of great value: to the community; to the church as a whole; to the pastor; and to the individual workers. After the work is done it will be well to have a meeting in which the experiences of the workers are related. It will be inspiring and helpful. Such meetings always remind one of the return of the seventy who "with joy" related their marvellous experiences (Luke x. 17).

ADVERTISING

The best form of advertising is the *personal invitation*. There are other forms, however, which may be used with good effect. From the *pulpit*, of course, announcements will be made. Then as the workers go on their rounds of

visitation, and as the people go here and there, they may carry with them an *announcement card*; this should be unique and attractive, bearing the invitation and a Scriptural message. A *neat sign* may be placed near the church entrance so as to catch the eye of the passer-by. The *local papers* may be used with good results. For the most part, newspaper men are exceedingly kind in opening their columns for religious information. Let us bear in mind that they are busy men and when they are gracious enough to lend us the use of their papers we should be appreciative enough to write out announcements, extracts of sermons, or whatever they may be willing to publish. Let us use every legitimate means for arousing interest in the Lord's work, yet avoiding the spectacular. We need not look askance upon the world's best methods of advertising but rather appropriate and use them to the very best advantage in the extension of the Master's kingdom on earth.

TRAINING IN PERSONAL WORK

The wisdom of Jesus is shown in gathering a few of His disciples together for training in soul-winning. He said: "Come ye after Me, and I will make you fishers of men." In His training of these few disciples He multiplied His power many times. The wise pastor will gather a few earnest souls about him and train and encourage

them in the service of winning others to the Lord Jesus. It will be a blessing to them and they in turn will become a blessing to others. It will do the pastor's own soul good to engage in a work like this. Our people need to learn the value of the personal touch and along with it the value of an immortal soul. In the words of Dr. Cortland Myers, Christians need to learn that: "This is the greatest work in the world, because it has in it the greatest love for humanity, the greatest obedience to Christ, the greatest elevation of character and the greatest satisfaction of life." Comparatively few Christians know how to open the Bible and point out the way of life to an inquiring soul. A most urgent need of to-day is a band of well-trained soul-winners in every church.

DETAILS OF PREPARATION

There are many details of preparation which a wise pastor and a thoughtful people can attend to without any suggestion here. Some of these things, though small in themselves, minister greatly to the success of a revival, or which, if neglected, may cause great annoyance. For example, it is well to have efficient ushers to seat the people and to look after their comfort; comfortable pews, good lights, healthful ventilation are essential to the success of any religious service. The good old brother who was holding a

tent-meeting was not far wrong when he upbraided the brethren for their neglect in providing for the comfort of those in attendance by saying: "Brethren, we need more straw. Sinners are going to hell for the need of more straw!" Some one has well said that no one was ever converted with cold feet. At least, it pays to look after the little things. No one can do so much to upset your plans and to retard your efforts as a careless, indifferent church-janitor, who is always out of place when you need him, or who is always doing the wrong thing when he does happen to be on hand. Any one who wants to be a benefactor to his race would do well to found a training-school for church-janitors. The good ones are few and far between. It is best to have some reliable persons to look after each of these matters during the revival that the pastor may be left free to do his own special work.

The suggestions here given contemplate a revival in which the pastor is expected to do the preaching. However, the preparation should be the same when he is to have outside assistance. In this case the pastor should consult with the brother who is to aid him in order that special preparation may be made along particular lines in harmony with the ideas of the brother who is to do the preaching. As a rule, more preparation is made for the outside brother than is made

when the pastor is to hold his own meeting. But if the same preparation be made in each case, we would often find that the meeting held by the church and the pastor would be more far-reaching in its results. After all our preparatory work is done let us remember that the best machine makes the least noise. Our organization which should be thorough, must not be too much in evidence and cannot be relied on to bring a revival without the blessing and coöperation of our Father in heaven. "I planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. So then neither is he that planteth anything, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase" (1 Cor. iii. 6, 7).

THE PASTOR'S PREPARATION

All that has been said pertains largely to the pastor's work; for in the preparation his chief task will be to see that others are put to work. The old saying is true, that it requires more skill to put a dozen people to work than it does to do the work of a dozen people. There is, however, some special preparation which the pastor must make for himself if he is to render the very best service possible.

The pastor must not neglect to feed his own soul. Like the mother whose anxious concern for her babe may lead her to forget to take proper nourishment for herself, so may the ear-

nest pastor, in his desire to minister faithfully to his flock, forget to nourish his own spiritual life. As the babe's safety is largely vouchsafed by the mother's good health, so is the spiritual welfare of the church in a measure guaranteed when the pastor is strong and vigorous in his spiritual life. Jesus, the greatest of evangelistic preachers, found it necessary to retire for seasons of meditation and prayer. Likewise, have all other great preachers found it necessary to retire for seasons of communion with the Father and that they might think upon His great plans.

The preacher who would be a winner of souls must not only *pray a great deal* but he must *have a knowledge of God's Word*. And more than this, he must not only have a knowledge of the contents of the Book but he must feed his soul upon its great truths. He should not only study it thoroughly and systematically but devotionally that his spiritual life may be nourished by its teaching. A dear good sister once said: "I read so many chapters a day in my regular course of reading and then I read some for myself." That is the ideal plan of Bible study: to read for information and then to read for inspiration. Both are necessary for the development of the well-rounded spiritual life.

The diligent pastor will ever be on the alert to *select suitable themes and subjects* and to *gather material* for a series of sermons which he

is expecting to preach. These discourses should cover a range of topics including all the fundamental doctrines of the Scriptures and should be arranged with some logical sequence. In speaking of "Revival Sermons," Dr. J. A. Broadus appropriately suggests: "First address the church, seeking to arouse a more spiritual life, to recall the worldly and quicken the pious, awakening in all the spirit of prayer and of intense concern for the salvation of others; then present for several meetings the terrors of the law, searching the conscience, arousing concern for sin, the fear of judgment, and the consequent imperative need of a Saviour; then set forth the love and mercy of God as displayed in the Gospel of His Son, the certainty and completeness of the divine forgiveness of sin upon repentance and faith; and finally urge immediate decision and acceptance of the gospel terms, with public confession of Christ. Whatever order may be observed, none of these topics can be safely omitted from a series of revival sermons."

The preacher will find it greatly to his advantage to *select and arrange his subjects* before the meeting begins and then to *have these printed on a neat card* with an invitation on the reverse side. In this way he can more easily arrange his subjects with logical connection; the time and nervous energy usually spent in deciding on

a subject can be spent on the preparation of the sermon ; the card with the subjects and the texts will serve as an aid in advertising the meeting and as a guide for daily Scripture readings during the meeting. The objection is sometimes made that to arrange the subjects beforehand is to preclude the guidance of the Holy Spirit in selecting fitting themes as occasions may demand. This is not necessarily the case ; the Spirit can aid us in the selection of these themes two or three weeks previous to the meeting as well as a few hours before a service is to begin. He is not limited to time and space as we are. If, however, one finds that another subject is more suitable for a particular service it will be an easy matter to substitute. But if the series has been carefully arranged it will be found that little change will be necessary.

VII

The Revival in Action

A series of meetings is a good thing, because if a man is awakened on Sunday, and there is to be a meeting on Monday, he is likely to come ; and the impression is deepened ; on Tuesday it grows deeper, and Wednesday and Thursday he will attend the after-meeting. I think if that could be done, many a church would double its membership right off.

—*Dwight L. Moody.*

It is very generally conceded, we think, that Mr. Moody was the prince of evangelists, and he perhaps made more of singing than any other man of his time, or before him, and if any one doubts the wisdom of his course in this direction, they have only to listen to the testimony of men and women from every country where the Gospel has been sung, to be convinced that the Gospel when sung is as powerful to convert men and women as it is when preached.—*D. B. Towner.*

What is evangelistic preaching, or what does it mean to do the work of an evangelist ? It is not being able to tell anecdotes in an interesting manner, or to clothe stories with beautiful language, but it is the presenting of the truth to men in such a way that they will see themselves as sinners, and then presenting Christ to them as the Saviour of sinners in such a way that they will receive Him as their personal Saviour, and thus be saved.—*William Patterson.*

Revivals bring undoubted benefits. They revive the church, quicken into joyous activity the dormant powers of the church, and awaken her to her divinely appointed ministry. The special mission of the church is to save souls ; sometimes this is forgotten and the members of the church act as if the mission of the church were to please and entertain the world, or to purchase a pipe organ, enlarge the choir, exchange preachers, give an oyster supper, or the like. A series of gospel-meetings will correct this erroneous idea, set the church in order, awaken certain members to a sense of their guilt and misery, and flood the souls of devout Christians with streams of love and joy.

—*John L. Brandt.*

VII

THE REVIVAL IN ACTION

THE revival season is necessary. While we should labour for and expect conversions continually in the regular services of the church, yet it will be found necessary to hold special meetings now and then. In this we must be governed by circumstances. We must not get into the "revival habit," however, and think that at a certain time of the year we must have a "revival" whether it be needed or not. The "revival" may be a bane or a blessing: a bane if it be relied upon as the only means of evangelism; a blessing if it be made to stimulate all the activities of the church and to increase the evangelistic spirit so that a revival will continue after the meeting is over. A revival must not be measured by the number of "professions of faith," but by the amount of spiritual life generated into the body of the church.

Let us always study conditions earnestly and carefully that we may ascertain, if possible, whether a revival is needed. In these matters the people should be consulted; they have a right to a voice in such matters, for they are the supporters of the work. If, for example, a pastor could not con-

vince his people that a revival were needed, it would be unwise for him to attempt to thrust it upon them. If there is any work in which there should be complete harmony it is the work of the Lord in which pastor and people are engaged. There must be agreement between the members as well as between pastor and members. If it is necessary for a baseball team to work in harmony to win a victory, it is certainly necessary for a pastor and people to work together if they are to win a victory over sin and the devil.

When it has once been decided that a *revival effort* is essential to the best interests of the church and community it should be *entered into with heart, zeal, and a determined spirit* to win a victory. Much time is often lost because a church is not ready for a meeting. Therefore, thorough preparation should be made and a suitable time selected. Then when that time arrives let other things be put aside as much as possible. A certain amount of earnestness and tensivity of interest should be manifest throughout the church. So many church-members have only a passive interest. They come and take their places in the services but it is with a sort of indifference which says: "Well, I am here; now revive me if you can." They are ready to get all they can but ready to give nothing. They should take hold with heart and hand and enter with vim and vigour into every part of the service.

The *revival time* should be *one of great joy* to pastor and people. "They joy before thee according to the joy in harvest." The revival should be a harvest time indeed in which many sheaves of precious souls are gathered into the garner of the Lord. We should work and pray to that end, and when the victory is gained that should be our chief cause of rejoicing. Whatever is done for God's glory should bring joy to the Christian's heart, even if it be to suffer pain for the name of the Lord Jesus. There must be something radically wrong with that Christian who cannot enjoy a true revival. There are, however, some revivals which a true Christian cannot very well enjoy because there is so much connected with them which is not Scriptural and does not appeal to good sense. So that if a Christian does not find any joy in participating in a revival we may be sure that something is wrong either with that Christian, or with the revival, or with both. The normal Christian and the normal revival will possess affinity for each other. Let us study conditions that we may know why many Christians are at variance with present-day revivals. Under normal conditions there will be harmony and agreement between the Christian and the revival.

The revival, however, should not be looked upon as a season for having a good time generally. Sometimes the revival is entered into

simply for what can be gotten out of it in the way of entertainment, amusement, and social enjoyments. And often those in charge of the revival are responsible for such a condition of affairs, for they throw out the bait and catch that for which they have baited their hooks, namely: the curious, the morbid, and the fanatical throng; and perhaps along with them a goodly number of sane-thinking, pious people who really question the propriety of the methods used, but who make no objection for fear that their influence in so doing will not be for the best interests of the meeting, or who do not wish to make an issue with the preacher in charge lest they should be called upon to account for their position in the matter and besides run the risk of suffering a painful humiliation by a scathing denunciation from the pulpit. Too frequently the preacher in charge of the meeting takes particular pains to make things interesting by telling many mirth-provoking jokes and by performing many little "tricks" and "antics" which are calculated to startle the people and to keep them in the attitude of expectancy—always wondering: "What next." The modern evangelist should not have all these things laid at his door either, for there are some pastors who are about as sensational as the professional evangelist dare be. The preacher, whether he be the pastor of the church, a visiting pastor, or an "evangelist," can ill afford to be

anything less than a Christian gentleman in the pulpit and out of it. Why some men who count themselves gentlemen on other occasions and then can be so ungentlemanly in the pulpit is a thing very difficult to understand, unless it be that they consider that their being ministers of the Gospel gives them license to do some things a gentleman cannot do.

The preacher who conducts a revival should also conduct himself as a Christian gentleman. He should always and everywhere preserve his dignity. Jesus did so, and, "It is enough for the disciple that he be as his Teacher, and the servant as his Lord" (Matt. x. 25). A preacher should be at least as gentlemanly in the pulpit as in the parlour; yet some preachers seem to feel that they have a right to be as rude and as coarse as a ruffian at times in the pulpit. Especially when one preacher goes into the pulpit of another he is honour bound to be at least respectful and respectable. But when he walks into the pulpit with an air of superiority, picks up the old and worn pulpit Bible, and flings it into a chair behind him with the remark: "That thing looks like it had come out of Noah's ark—you'd better get a new Bible," he ceases to be respectful; or when he becomes pettish and impatient because of some little infraction of his standard of propriety and loses his temper, ending in a tirade of abuse against the offender, he ceases to be re-

spectable; or when he becomes wrought up and rushes from one side of the platform to the other—or from one end of the aisle to the other—and in his furor he tears off his collar and dashes it to the floor, he ceases to be a gentleman; and when a preacher ceases to be a gentleman it were time that he cease to be a minister of the Gospel.

Let the preacher *preach the Scriptures and not the daily paper*. Let him *preach Christ and not himself*. With many “revivalists” there is too much of the big *I* and the little *you*. There are too many nice little stories in which he has played the part of hero, philosopher, or humourist just as the case has required. Often by his attitude and bearing, or by his gestures and intonations of voice, he betrays a self-consciousness and a conceit which are repulsive to the average hearer. Let the preacher be a natural man—a normal preacher. Let him avoid freakishness. The day is past for the long-haired, theatrical jumping-jack to hold his place in the Christian ministry and retain the respect of sensible people; they have become tired of it. Let there be no straining after effect; in this there is an emptiness and a shallowness which are easily detected by the serious thinking person. Freaks and antics do not strengthen personality; *if you want to possess a strong personality be an out and out man*.

The wise and earnest preacher will not allow himself to come between his message and his hearers. The message he delivers and the Christ he proclaims must hide the man or he has failed of the highest art of persuasion. He that loses himself is the one who finds precious souls. It is said of one of the great sculptors that he wore a candle in the band of his cap. On being asked why he did so he replied: "Lest my shadow fall upon my work." So we who are engaged in the high art of winning souls to Christ cannot afford to let our shadows fall upon our work; it is too important to be trifled with; we must guard it jealously lest some should fail to gain heaven because of our mistakes.

The preaching that is to win men must appeal to the understanding, reach the heart, and stir the conscience. To do this *the preaching must be positive.* Away with your doubts if you would rescue men from sin and death. The man who believes something is the man the world needs to hear—he is the man the people will come to hear. The man who would win people to eternal life must have no doubts. He must believe with all his heart the truth of God's Word. He must preach not an emasculated Gospel and a fragmentary Bible, but a whole Gospel and a whole Bible. Let him not trouble himself about the higher critics and infidels, but let him preach the truth in its purity and look to God for results.

Our mission is not to prove the Bible by arguments but to declare it as the message of God to a lost world. Neither let us be so anxious to show our learning and talents as to show people that they are sinners and that Jesus is their Saviour.

The preaching must be personal. It must make the sinner feel: "Thou art the man." We do not mean that individuals should be singled out and preached to, but that there should be a directness in the message such as to cause the sinner to realize his need. Often it is, however, that a knowledge of the difficulties and the mental states of the unsaved in the congregation will be of great assistance in making the appeal more direct. Therefore, it is well for the minister who is preaching to have as accurate knowledge as possible of the unsaved persons in the community. He may ascertain much of this information from others, but it is best to secure it at first hand. For this reason the pastor has a better opportunity to reach the people under the influence of his own church than has any one else, and is, therefore, the proper one to conduct the revival. But after all, let us have faith in the blessed old Gospel. The Spirit can carry the message where human intelligence cannot penetrate. It is a personal Gospel from beginning to end and when it is preached in earnestness and power it will awaken the con-

science and in a marvellous way will bring the soul face to face with its needs.

Evangelistic preaching, whether in the revival or in the regular service, should be *characterized by earnestness, zeal, and energy*. This does not mean that the preacher should be a ranter. There is an extreme either way : that of putting too much physical energy into a sermon and that of not putting enough. The lack of what may be termed mere *physical earnestness* has been the undoing of many a good preacher. Many a man has ruined himself as an effective preacher because he could not, or would not, put life into his message. Sluggishness in manner and drollery in speech will render ineffective the best sermon on earth. There is so much in the way a thing is said. The preacher may mean all he is saying from the depths of his heart yet he may not seem to mean a word of it. That kind of a message will not arouse and win men.

The preacher must not only be in earnest but he must show that he is in earnest by his every word and action. Let him train himself in vigour. As Dr. J. P. Greene used to say to his ministerial students when lecturing : " You will have to halloo a little once in a while to let the people know that you are preaching." It does the preacher good to let himself know that he is preaching sometimes. That which the old-time people called " liberty " will mean great

power to the man who knows how to attain it. He must be able to enter into his sermon with a sort of self-abandon in which the preacher is lost in his message. He is to convict and to convince. He is pleading for a verdict in favour of Jesus and let him remember that while "a good speech is a good thing, a verdict is the thing." Therefore, let him bend all his powers in that direction.

A great deal is now being said about *the man and his methods*. It is my sincere conviction that we need more man and less methods. We are in danger of "going to seed" on machinery and methods. If Jesus had any particular methods for soul-winning I have been unable to discover them. To my mind the uniqueness of Jesus' ministry was in the absence of methods. He performed no two miracles alike; He treated no two cases alike; He preached no two sermons alike; He made no two appeals alike; and so far as we are able to ascertain, no two persons were saved just alike. He sought an approach to each soul by whatever means He deemed most effective. He met each individual on his particular ground and treated the case on its merits. Jesus was absolutely without methods in the sense that the term is now used.

Unscriptural methods weaken the power of the Gospel. When a man preaches the Gospel and then begins to manipulate the congregation

with his tricks and clap-trap methods he implies that the Gospel is not "the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth" unless the preacher's methods be added to it. He comes to rely more upon his methods than upon the power of the Gospel. He makes the impression that people cannot be saved without his methods. If any one objects he is ready with the reply that people have been saved in great numbers at other places where the identical methods have been used; and he remarks that his methods will do the work for them there if they will just bear with him long enough. Then he makes the objectors feel very mean and contemptible because they have dared question his methods which have wrought such wonders.

A false standard of evangelism has arisen which has a tendency to retard the progress of the Gospel when preached in the ordinary Scriptural way. In some localities people have become so accustomed to certain methods of evangelism that they will not respond to the gospel appeal unless those methods are resorted to. This, no doubt, accounts for so few conversions at the regular services of many of our churches. The unwillingness of the people to respond to the gospel message unless certain conditions are complied with reminds me of the following incident: In a certain home in a

rural community in Missouri the baby had been taught to take his nourishment while some one played the French-harp. One day the family went to town and while at one of the stores hungry-time came round but the little fellow demurred. No amount of coaxing could induce him to take his accustomed repast. He was making things rather embarrassing for the mother, when the grandmother, who is always "a very present help in time of trouble," suggested the musical accompaniment. The needed instrument was secured, the family all gathered around in the most homelike manner while one member of the family played the accustomed tune with a foot-pat accompaniment; the youngster proceeded without any further objections.

The reader will pardon my use of this story. But the incident is not without its lesson. The baby had been spoiled. Now what can be any worse than a spoiled baby unless it be a spoiled man or woman? Men and women have been spoiled by useless and nonsensical methods in evangelistic work so that normal efforts do not appeal to them; they must have the clap-trap accompaniment. Modern evangelism needs a house-cleaning as to methods before true evangelism will have its due weight and power. Before we resort to any method let us first ask: Is it Scriptural? Is it necessary? If not Scriptural

then it is not necessary and should be relegated to the rubbish-heap at once.

People can be won to Christ without so-called methods. The one great need of to-day is men to proclaim the gospel message faithfully, in public and in private, and to rely upon God and the Holy Spirit to perform the work of regeneration. Let the preacher who would win men to salvation make one supreme appeal and that *to make a full surrender to Christ.* This is the END of all evangelistic effort; then why confuse this with any other appeal? Many people under high-pressure methods respond to various propositions which they do not understand. Others are tempted to act on invitations without any heart or conviction, therefore, "whatsoever is not of faith is sin." *The crying need of to-day is not a man with a method, but a man with a message.*

What, then, shall be our *norm for pursuing evangelistic work?* The example of Jesus and the apostles is good enough for us. Let us follow the historians' narratives of their work and emulate their simplicity of style and directness of appeal. Can we think of Jesus as standing before a great multitude and in magician-like manner attempt to bring them under His sway by having them stand, kneel, or prostrate themselves according to His signal or word of command? Can we think of Peter as standing

up on the day of Pentecost submitting a proposition by which he could have known who were Parthians, Medes, Elamites, the dwellers of Mesopotamia, Judea, Cappadocia, Pontus, Asia, and so forth? A modern evangelist would have had a great time that day making propositions and would have gotten many new points for his next campaign. Can we think of Paul standing on Mars Hill putting the people through a sifting process by which he could have found out the number of Stoics, Skeptics, Sophists, and Epicureans present? The modern evangelist would not have missed his opportunity to find out some interesting things about that unique audience. He would have at least held an experience meeting in which they would have been expected to express their opinions of his sermon and his methods. The folks on Mars Hill came off easily with Paul but they would not have done so with the "evangelist" of to-day.

The fewer and the simpler the methods used the better. A man is not saved by striking an attitude but by bowing his stubborn will in subjection to the will of God. Yet there are some preachers who seem to think that there is great efficacy in having saved people strike one attitude and unsaved people another; it shows at least that there is a difference, they think. But the Word of God will show them the difference if it be faithfully preached. "For the word of God

is living, and active, and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and quick to discern the thoughts and intents of the heart. And there is no creature that is not made manifest in His sight" (Heb. iv. 12, 13). Yes, my brethren, the New Testament way of doing things will prove adequate for twentieth century evangelism. May God speed the day when we shall return to it in deed and in truth! That day will have all but come when we make up our minds to cast aside whatever cannot be sanctioned by the teaching and spirit of the New Testament, and when we come to rely wholly upon God's appointed means for saving the lost.

A few practical suggestions will be sufficient for the remainder of this chapter:

1. *It is well to begin the services on time.* The services should begin at a reasonable hour when most of the people can be present. The order of service need not be the same all the time. Begin with something other than a song once in a while. Variety will add spice to a revival and it might add to our regular services too. Keep the different parts of the service well joined; long pauses are exasperating to a waiting congregation, besides it is a waste of time. The songs should be selected beforehand and a general idea of the service formed by the one who conducts

the service. This, of course, should be done by the pastor for he is the proper one to conduct the revival even if he has the assistance of another brother.

2. *It is important that the services be closed on time.* It is not right to keep people at a service till a late hour. Preachers sometimes allow their enthusiasm to run beyond their judgment in matters of this kind. We must guard against having "a zeal not according to knowledge." We need not think that we can sin against these bodies of ours without having to pay the penalty, even if we are engaged in the Lord's work. "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual (Marg., belonging to reason) service." We dishonour God when we abuse our bodies; this we do when we hold a service beyond a reasonable length. From an hour to an hour and a half is long enough for any service. Let us remember that many people have to work hard the next day and do not have time for a refreshing nap as perhaps the preacher finds time to take. Just here, I am constrained to say that the all-night service, which is so much in vogue in some quarters, does not appeal to me as being either Scriptural or sensible. Jesus spent all night in prayer, it is true, but He did not ask it of His disciples. Paul preached till a very late hour

one night but we must remember that the boy episode may have helped to protract the service. These instances cannot be taken as examples for us in a revival service. The overwrought nerves and a weakened physical organism are frequent causes for the depressing reaction which follows so many revivals. Normal evangelism will correct many present-day errors.

3. *Be instant in prayer.* "Pray without ceasing." A prayer-meeting should be held just before the evening service. The room for this meeting should be separate from the main audience room so that the service cannot be disturbed by the arrival of the main congregation. If the church building has not a separate room one might be secured near by. In some instances it will be found advantageous to have separate prayer-meetings—one for the brethren and one for the sisters. The more timid Christians may be encouraged to lead in prayer where separate meetings are held. Such meetings may be made a great power for good in a revival. They should be led by lay members, the leader being appointed the previous evening; or what is better still, the leaders may be appointed beforehand for the entire meeting. Let everything that is said and done be to the point. Here you will have to guard against the religious fanatic who may destroy the effect of the meetings. Beware of the one who wants to talk too much; these

are *prayer* meetings and not talking meetings. This is no place for long-winded experiences and those who attempt them should be silenced on the spot. When the time comes for the regular service let everything be dropped and all enter the main audience room.

4. *Do personal work.* This requires more skill than any other form of Christian service. For the most part, it is not best to approach unsaved people in the congregation, for example, when the invitation is being given. When a request is made for Christian people in general to go out into the congregation to do personal work often the very ones who *ought not* to go are the ones who volunteer. Many serious-minded people have been repulsed in this way. The old-fashioned brother was not far wrong when he said: "If they are converted they will come without so much prompting." It is always best to speak with unsaved persons in private, either in the home, before or after services, or at some time and place where you can talk, read the Scriptures, and pray unhindered.

5. *Avoid excitement.* In many modern revivals it must be admitted that strong efforts are made to move upon the emotions of the people. Emotion has its place in the religious experience, we all know; but when emotion is made the basis for Christian experience and service it becomes a snare to the uninstructed and they

are led to deceive themselves. For one to act on impulse and not in the light of knowledge and faith is but to pave the way for disappointment and perhaps for destruction. In a Southern city several years ago a meeting was held in which there were nearly four hundred professions of faith. The present pastor of that church stated recently that only three of that number were now members of that church. Such has been the sad history of many a revival where excitement has played a large part. We do not want that kind of a revival in our churches. Says Mr. Spurgeon: "Do try, therefore, dear brethren, to give your hearers something beside a string of pathetic anecdotes that will make them cry. Tell the people something; you are to teach them, to preach the Gospel to your hearers, to make them understand as far as you can the things which should make for their peace. We cannot expect people to be saved by our sermons, unless we try really to instruct them by what we say to them."

6. *Plan to conserve the results.* As soon as one unites with a church that person should be enlisted in active service in some department of the church's work. When new converts are not tied on to the church's activities they soon start adrift. There should be those in every church whose duty it is to seek out personally the new members and make them feel that they are not

only wanted in that church but needed. It is an excellent plan to hold a reception for the new members soon after the revival. All this should not be left to the pastor for he has a multitude of things to look after. He should, however, see to it that these new members are cared for in their new spiritual life. They should be formed into a class for instruction in doctrine and service. Or some service, such as the young peoples' meeting or prayer-meeting, should be set apart for a time for this kind of teaching for the new converts. We need to learn the meaning of the remainder of the Great Commission: "Teaching them to observe all things." An intelligent, active church-membership will mean a power in the advancement of Christ's kingdom on earth.

VIII

A Plea for the Children

Doubtless most, perhaps all, souls, do at first repudiate the principle of this new heredity; that is, they ignore or deny God's gracious intention for them; hence it is that men need to be evangelized, even young children need to be. They need to reverse their attitude where rebellious self-will has asserted itself, at that very point where they had repudiated their birth-right in Christ and its claim upon them.—*H. C. Mabie.*

First of all, parents are responsible for the conversion of the children. The first and greatest responsibility of parents regarding their children is their salvation. The responsibility to feed and clothe and educate our children is nothing to our responsibility to bring them to Christ and bring them up in Christ. The parent who fails to bring his children to Christ has failed at the main point of parental responsibility. Yet parents are willing to leave the conversion of their children to others, to the minister, to the Sunday-school teacher, or even to chance.—*Hammond and Torrey.*

Few subjects are of more vital importance in the preaching work of the ministry, and at the same time more neglected, than that of the preacher's relation to the children of his congregation. When a man's best thinking is put into such form that children will understand it and be interested, he has the world at his feet. And when he forgets the children and preaches for the grown-up world only, he often misses both.
—*Editor Sunday-School Times.*

Where a child is born of Christian parents, and is trained in a Christian home, the actual acceptance of Jesus Christ as Lord by that child is likely to be natural and simple, without revulsion, without earth-shock, soft as the kiss of morning on the brow of Nature, sweet as the passing of zephyr over the field of flowers, yet there must be definite submission, and no child because born of Christian parents, is therefore a Christian.—*G. Campbell Morgan.*

VIII

A PLEA FOR THE CHILDREN

*J*ESUS had an interest in the children. The work of our Lord on earth would not have been complete had He overlooked the little ones. But He did not do this; several times during His ministry He took special notice of them and made them the special objects of His care. And no more beautiful picture is brought to our minds in the gospel narratives than those occasions where the children came upon the scene of His labours. These were not mere incidents in His life, separated from the main issue of His work. On the contrary, they reveal to us the great truth that His interest in children was as real and as vital as was His interest in the rest of humanity. His love, His sympathy, His atoning work embraced all mankind. The salvation of the children formed a part of His great plan; "for," says He, "to such belongeth the kingdom of God." The passage clearly shows that children are heirs to the kingdom of heaven. And they are so, not by the imposition of some man-made ceremony about which they know nothing, nor by their own natural birth, but by virtue of the atoning work

of Christ in which He made provision for the redemption of the whole human race, and by virtue of the faith which they are enabled to exercise towards Him as Saviour.

The question as to how infants are saved does not come within the range of this discussion. The Scriptures have little to say on that subject anyway; but what they do say, leads us to conclude that no human soul is lost merely for the sin of nature. Souls are condemned for actual transgressions; so we are concerned only with those who have reached the age of accountability—who are able to discern between right and wrong, and who can appreciate to some degree the feeling of responsibility. Of course, no man knows when this age is reached. No doubt it comes earlier than we think it does. It varies with the individual child according to mental and spiritual capacities and depends largely upon religious training. If the child has been brought up in a pious Christian home, and has had the influence of a good Sunday-school, and, like Timothy of old, from a babe has known the Scriptures, he will be made wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus at a much earlier age than he would be without these advantages. This work of building for eternity begins very early; therefore, we should see to it that the child has an even chance in his race for life and heaven, against sin and temptation.

Children need a Saviour. One of the beauties of the religion of Jesus is that it appeals to old and young alike. Although it has depths the wisest and most philosophical mind cannot penetrate, yet the very substance of it can be appreciated by the child of a few years. Those very truths which the great Apostle confesses his inability to comprehend were able to make the young Timothy wise unto salvation. The very adaptedness of the gospel message to all classes of individuals is a miracle within itself. Every child experiences a "sense of incompleteness." He intuitively seeks more knowledge and a wider experience. The former he seeks, sometimes at the chagrin of his elders who are not able to answer his questions, and the latter he gets, often, very much to his own grief and dismay. But he is bound to have both the knowledge and the experience at any cost. This is all because he experiences a lack, a feeling that he is not complete within himself.

Now, *the child experiences this lack in things spiritual.* No class of individuals on earth is more responsive to religious truth than children, because it meets their need. When they begin to manifest this need it is time to point them to the Saviour. Once while telling a class of boys, seven or eight years of age, about the kind of heart one must have in order to go to heaven, one little fellow said: "I wish I could tear out

this old heart of mine." "Why so, Freddie?" I asked. "Because," said he, "I can never go to heaven with this old bad heart." He felt in his soul just what every sinner must feel before he can be saved, namely, that a power not his own must intervene and make new the old, corrupt heart. When the child thus comes to feel his need, and is brought face to face with his Lord, he is most likely to accept Him as Saviour. Of course, we must remember that along with the unregenerate heart there is a stubborn will which may not yield to the call of the divine will, therefore, let us pray that the Holy Spirit may aid in the work of breaking down the barriers in the soul lest the heart be hardened against the truth.

Children need a Saviour from sin. They soon become conscious of the fact that they are sinners. Early in life they feel the shame, guilt, and even remorse of their sins. They need to be taught, not only that there is a just God to whom they will be held accountable for their sins, but that there is, also, a loving, sympathetic Saviour who can and will forgive their sins if they confess them and turn from them; and that He will impart to them a new strength within, which will enable them to overcome their sinful habits and passions. They are easily convicted of their sins if the truth of God's Word is brought to their minds properly. And if Jesus as a loving, powerful Saviour is brought to their hearts and con-

sciences they may be led to accept Him as Saviour, gladly. First, let us lead them to see their need; then let us lead them to the foot of the cross and give them a vision of our crucified Redeemer, through whom we have hope of everlasting life.

Children need a Saviour to share their burdens and sorrows. We are in the habit of speaking of childhood as "the happiest time of life." This may be true in most instances; yet there is no reason why we should not grow happier with the lapse of time. But children have many griefs and sorrows that are as real to them as ours are to us. They may forget them sooner than we do, but they are real while they last. They are often teased, frightened, and unjustly treated by companions at school, or by older members of the family at home. They have their worries with their games and toys; their toils and disappointments at school. They are often the victims of errors and superstitions which greatly mar their happiness. They endure much physical pain while running the gauntlet of "children's diseases," through which all have to pass. Is it not a blessed privilege to lead these dear ones to cast all their care upon Him who careth for them?

Children need comfort and sympathy in bereavement. Often they are bereft of father, or mother, or even of both. And no one knows,

but the Saviour above, the sorrow they endure. In these dark hours they should be pointed to One who can and does sympathize with them to the very last degree. A poor widowed mother fell sick with pneumonia ; also, several of the children. The children were taken to the hospital, and while they were there, the mother died at home. The children continually expressed anxiety about the sick mother, of whose death they had not been apprised. As one of the little girls was taken from the hospital to be placed in an orphans' home, she said to the nurse who had attended her, " I am so afraid I shall never see my mamma again." To such a child is not the thought of a reunion with the mother in heaven a blessed thought ? And do you not think it a source of comfort to a child like that to know that there is a Father in heaven who cares for and watches over the fatherless, and that those who care for them in their bereavement are the " angels of mercy " sent to do the heavenly Father's will ? " Surely He hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows," is a promise for the children, as well as for others. The consolation and the hope which the religion of Jesus holds out to all, is comforting to the children also. Should they be deprived of such blessed privileges ? " Blessed are they that mourn : for they shall be comforted."

Children need a Saviour in the hour of death.

It is a well-known fact that the majority of the human race die in childhood. If they have reached an accountable age, most assuredly do they need a Saviour. A little girl, who had confessed Jesus in a mission in Louisville, was taken to the infirmary for a severe operation. It was found necessary to perform, not only one, but many operations. Although her body was almost literally cut to pieces, through her many weeks of suffering, no word of complaint escaped her lips. Such patience, faith, and Christian fortitude have been rarely witnessed in the most mature Christian. She lived in the realities of the hopes and the joys of the unseen world. Christ and heaven were real to her, because she had early learned to trust in Him who had said, "Suffer the little children to come to Me: forbid them not: for to such belongeth the kingdom of God." Her sweet spirit departed to God who gave it. But, oh, what a comfort it was to her parents to know that she had died in the triumphs of a Christian's faith!

And, should they come to the hour of death, even before they have reached the age of accountability, the thought of a Saviour in heaven is a great comfort to them. A little boy, who had attended the same mission Sunday-school, was taken very ill in the summer of 1900. Previous to his illness he had purchased his pencils, tablets and books preparatory to his first

school. A few months before we carried his mother to Cave Hill cemetery. All through his illness he expressed a desire to see his mother who had gone to heaven. A few days before his death, he would frequently lift his little hand and wave it gently, while a most heavenly smile would come over his face. His father, who sat by his bedside continually, felt sure that little Paul was dreaming of mother in heaven. But little Paul was not disappointed in his plans for school : for he went to sit at the feet of the great Teacher who said, " Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me ; for I am meek and lowly in heart ; and ye shall find rest unto your souls." Is it not better that these little ones have some knowledge of heavenly things, than to go out into the dark unknown, not having learned to trust in Jesus ?

Children may become Christians very early in life. It is the most natural thing for them to do. Mr. Spurgeon, who was a strong believer in early conversions, says, " Capacity for believing lies more in the child than in the man. We grow less rather than more capable of faith ; every year takes the unregenerate mind farther away from God, and makes it less capable of receiving the things of God." You may ask, What does the child know about the deep things of God ? But salvation is not wholly a thing

of knowledge. If it depended on complete knowledge, who then could be saved? The child possesses that which is of more value to him than extensive knowledge, namely, intuition. God has not left Himself without witness in each human soul. There is conscience, revealing what is right and what is wrong; there is a well-grounded belief in a Supreme Being; there is a longing for immortality. Now add to these intuitions, which are always on the side of God and truth, the knowledge of Jesus as Saviour, and you have a most powerful basis for the evangelistic appeal. The intuitions of the child are in the supremacy; to believe is easier than not to believe. He is open-minded and open-hearted; the doors and windows of his soul are wide open during all waking hours, and he is "at home" to receive whatever or whoever may wish to enter. Let us help him to stand guard at these various avenues to the soul that only truth and God may enter and abide. The child possesses, naturally, these beliefs about duty, God, and heaven, even though his religious training has been meagre. I have never met but one infidel child in my life, and that was a little boy who had been reared up under the influence of an infidel grandfather. The exception only proves the rule. When children are old enough to do wrong, they are old enough to do right. If that boy, under the teaching of error, could become

an infidel so early in life, does it not stand to reason that the same boy under the teaching of Christian truth would have become a Christian at the same age? The intuitions of the child are less likely to err than the reasonings of the adult. We all have to come to the point where we just believe, and that the child can do as well as we; in some respects better than we, for his mind is not beclouded by error, and his soul is not entrammelled by a sinful life. Faith will carry the soul farther than reason anyway; yet Christianity is the most reasonable system of truth ever presented to the human mind. Then, while the child is in that susceptible age when he lives and moves in an atmosphere of faith, let us help him into the right way while these great truths may be laid hold of so readily.

Children enjoy religion. We often hear grown-ups say, "I don't believe in children becoming Christians." That is exactly what those disciples thought when they entered their protest against the children's coming to Jesus, by which "He was moved with indignation" and rebuked them for it. Would you rob these little ones of the peace and blessedness which come from trusting in the Saviour? Again, some will say, "Well, it is all right for them to believe if they want to, but I don't believe in their uniting with the church." Perhaps it would not be wise to allow this to every child who expressed a desire

to do so, but let us remember that no soul can be truly happy in the service of Jesus, until that soul has yielded itself in loving obedience. "And hereby we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments." Christian activity is a means of growth; therefore let us be careful not to place a stumbling-block in the way of one of these "little ones."

The conversion of children is more likely to be real than that of men and women. Mr. Spurgeon is given credit for this remarkable statement: "I will say broadly that I have more confidence in the spiritual life of the children that I have received into this church than I have in the spiritual condition of the adults thus received. I will even go further than that. I have usually found a clearer knowledge of the Gospel, and a warmer love to Christ, in the child-convert than in the man-convert. I will even astonish you still more by saying that I have met with a deeper spiritual experience in children of ten and twelve than I have in certain persons of fifty and sixty." The man of experience is the man who has a right to speak. Surely, such a statement from such a man should be sufficient to stop the mouths of gainsayers as to child-conversions. Some of the brightest conversions I have ever witnessed have been those of children. Once, after a fellow student had preached for me in a mission, a beautiful brown-eyed girl of eight

or nine came forward and gave her heart to Jesus. I shall never forget that heavenly radiance which shone out from her face. We all felt the power of the Spirit in the service that night. Many such conversions of children has it been my pleasure to witness, and if it please God, I shall hope to witness yet many more. "Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall in nowise enter therein."

Children make good workers for the Lord. Marion Lawrance has very truly said, "It is a great thing to save a soul at any age, but it is the greatest thing to save a soul plus a life." Those who come into the kingdom late in life have only a short time at best to serve the Lord. But those who come to Christ early in life have many possible years of service before them. Many of the great leaders in Christian service were converted in childhood. Polycarp, one of the apostolic fathers, at nine; Matthew Henry, the prince of commentators, was eleven; Jonathan Edwards, the noted theologian, evangelist, and college president, at seven; Isaac Watts, the greatest writer of church hymns, at nine; Henry Drummond, the notable scientist-evangelist, nine; Bishop McCabe, according to Mr. Hammond, was only eight when he began the Christian life. Surely, with such shining examples as these, no one can doubt the possibility of an early con-

version in any well-developed, well-taught child.

Children can do a work in soul-winning which cannot be done by any one else. A little girl became very much interested in her own salvation, and made urgent requests of her parents that she be allowed to unite with the church. They objected but she was persistent. Finally, the mother, who had been brought up a Catholic, sent for me to come and talk with the little daughter whose deep concern in matters of religion the parent could not understand. I opened the Bible and read and explained the way of salvation the best I could. The mother sat by and listened eagerly. I observed her interest and said much that was meant for her benefit, too. The final result was that the daughter, mother, and father, the latter giving up his position with a liquor house in that city, all were converted, baptized, and received into the church in a very short time. This little girl did the work which no minister could have done alone in leading her parents to Christ.

The children are powerful agents in leading their companions to Christ. It has been my pleasure to see some splendid work—zealous, prayerful, earnest, sane—done by children in leading others into the right way. A bright little boy of ten accepted Jesus in one of my meetings. He immediately began to work upon

his companions, some of whom were shy and indifferent. He did not talk much but worked. He would take another boy into the prayer-service, then go with him into the regular service, bring him near the front, sit with him, now and then speak a word for the Master, and in every way showed a sympathetic interest in him. As soon as one companion was brought to a decision, he would go for another, and thus the work was kept up until several were brought into the kingdom of Christ. Was not this a glorious work for one so young? And do you not think that the work of this little boy was as acceptable in the sight of God as that of the most noted evangelist of to-day? Many professed Christians have lived through many decades without having led as many to Jesus as did this little boy in a few short days. We can praise the Lord that even a little child can do work that the angels in heaven might covet the privilege of doing.

Therefore, *should we be more in earnest in leading to the Lord Jesus the children* who so much need a Saviour, who in these tender years can appreciate a Saviour's love and trust His saving grace, and whose work may redound to His glory through time and eternity. If we love the Lord Jesus, and the lives of those who are lost, then we must be more aggressive in leading the children to heed the command of God:

“Remember also thy Creator in the days of thy youth, before the evil days come, and the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say I have no pleasure in them.”

IX

The Work of Winning the Young

Love is the hammer that breaks the heart. Our scholars are drawn by the power of love. Love will do what nothing else will do. These boys and girls want to know right away that we love them and are interested in them. . . . It is a great thing to save a soul at any age, but it is the greatest thing to save a soul plus a life. The child is in the centre of the world. That little child Jesus put in the midst has been in the midst ever since, and the world revolves around it.

—*Marion Lawrance.*

We instruct our children and seek to encourage them, but are surprised if they evidence anything like a religious experience. A child may not understand theology, but it can enjoy religion. Go to the child at once with a spiritual appeal and expect the spiritual effect. Do not talk of their need of experience. Give them a chance, and you will be surprised to see the wonderful fruit they will bear.

—*Dr. Watkinson.*

Tell the young people that the time when character is fixed is during the period when most of them attend the Sunday-school. Tell them that ninety-two per cent. of the Christian churches in America were gathered into its fellowship before they were twenty-three years of age, and the vast majority before they were sixteen. When will we teachers realize that a child cannot make progress until it faces in the right direction, and that the time when we turn to face Godward is the greatest hour in any life? The ignorance at this point on the part of many parents and some teachers is monumental. We talk about religion as if it were a matter of creed or law, of logic and philosophy. As a matter of fact, Christianity is wholly embraced in the words LOVE and LIFE. We make bold to say that a child who is old enough to love and obey his parents is old enough to love and obey God.

—*Charles L. Goodell.*

IX

THE WORK OF WINNING THE YOUNG

THE work of winning the children to Christ belongs to every disciple of Jesus. There are, however, some special classes of Christian workers to whom I wish to make direct appeal. There is no doubt that children are unjustly discriminated against in matters of religion; to say the least, they are neglected. It is for this cause that I make this plea in behalf of child religion: that pastors and people may be stimulated and encouraged to become more active in the work of leading the children to accept Christ and to train them for service in His cause. Dr. R. A. Torrey says of such a work: "No other form of Christian effort brings such immediate, such large, and such lasting results as work for the conversion of children. It has many advantages over other forms of work. First of all, children are more easily led to Christ than adults. In the second place, they are more likely to stay converted than those apparently converted at a later period of life. They also make better Christians, as they do not have so much to unlearn as those

who have grown old in sin. They have more years of service before them. A man converted at sixty is a soul saved plus ten years of service ; a child converted at ten is a soul saved plus sixty years of service."

This is, first of all, *the work of parents*. The child is building character ; and the parent above all others needs to realize that this begins very early. Alas ! How soon these little ones grow up and go out from under our influence forever ! What we do must be done quickly. Whether the boast of Xavier—that if he be given a child until it was seven years of age it would be forever after a Catholic—be true or not, it is a fact that early impressions are never erased. "Train up a child in the way in which he should go and when he is old he will not depart from it." The difficulty lies not in knowing the way he will go, but in the training up. It is this part of the process which demands our chief concern. The mind of the child is like the cylinder of wax, once used in the phonograph, upon which delicate impressions are made. These impressions remain ; so that years afterwards the same sounds may be reproduced. So with the child ; many impressions are received, both good and bad, and these largely determine the character in after life. Very truly has the immortal Milton written :

"Childhood shows the man
As morning shows the day."

As the child grows older it is more clearly manifest as to what his character shall be. If his youthful nature has been nourished by the warm and tender words of parental affection, if he has breathed the pure and vitalizing atmosphere of a pious and godly home, if the ever watchful eye of the parent is over him to discipline, encourage, instruct, and to check his evil tendencies, that child is laying a foundation for a character that will stand in time and eternity. The prime object of all training is to bring the will of the child into harmony with the will of God. No human power can complete such a work—only the Holy Spirit can consummate it—but the parent can do much to lay the foundation for this most important work. “Obedience,” says the author of “The Unfolding Life,” “is only activity under law. It begins with the submission to the will of the parent, but when at last it has a response of the whole life to the will of God and rendered of voluntary and loving choice, it has reached its highest unfolding. This is the goal towards which all nurture of activity must be directed, else no life is safe after it goes out from the restraints of the home.” Parent, what sort of a life-foundation is your child laying? This is a question of vital importance. Are you indifferent to it? If so, then may God pity both you and your child!

The parent must help the child to lay a good

foundation. In the construction of a great building it is sometimes necessary to dig deep and to clear away the sand, the boulders, and the débris, before solid earth or a ledge of rock can be reached upon which to lay the foundation. This is a good deal of trouble and expense, but it pays. So with the child; he may have some faults to correct, habits to break, weaknesses to overcome—many of which he has inherited or imitated from the parent—and some he has because he is human and belongs to a race of sinners. It is not sufficient that you tell him that his foundation is bad, and then leave him to mend it the best he can; he needs the parents' help. By loving and patient effort, help him to clear away the rubbish that he may find a solid foundation upon which to build, and let us be sure that that foundation be the solid rock of Christ.

Parents are anxious that their children lay a good foundation for other things: why not in matters of religion? They are anxious that their sons be trained so as to lead a successful business or professional life; that their daughters shall be educated to be happy in the home life, or to pursue some high vocation, or it may be that they have social aspirations for them. But what of the training for a happy and useful religious life? While to some parents this is a question of first importance, to many it is a matter of indifference. If it were a question of deep

concern with them, they would certainly make a more earnest effort in that direction. If it is wise to build upon Christ and His words, and foolish not to do so, then is it not wise for us to encourage our children to build upon the rock, Christ? And is it not the height of folly not to have them do so? "For other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ." "And in none other is there salvation: for neither is there any other name under heaven, that is given among men, wherein we must be saved." Joshua appreciated both his privilege and responsibility when he said: "As for me and my house, we will serve Jehovah." Would that all parents thus felt it their duty—both by precept and example—to encourage their households—children, relatives, servants, all to serve the Lord with sincere hearts.

We need to make more of household religion. A multitude of services at the house of God cannot take the place of home religion. There are many Christian homes which are not pious homes. Christianity and piety are not always synonymous. It may be traceable in some instances to the multiplicity of church services, the rushing age in which we live, divided families religiously, and to worldly-mindedness—but home religion is woefully lacking in nearly all quarters. The family is never gathered together for Scripture-reading and prayer, the hymns of grace are

never sung, and religious topics are rarely discussed in a way to be helpful to spiritual growth. The children are the ones who suffer most by such omissions. There are some professed Christian parents who are little better than heathen as far as the religious instruction of their children is concerned. The parent must feel a responsibility, not only for the body, but for the soul as well. The body is temporal; the soul is eternal; therefore if a preference is to be shown, let it be in favour of the soul which is immortal. "But if any man provideth not for his own, and especially his own household, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an unbeliever." This applies, not only to the man who neglects to provide for the material needs of his household, but for the spiritual needs as well. The unbeliever provides food and raiment for the body; now, if the Christian, who has greater light and knowledge, does no more than the unbeliever, he does even less; for he is expected to take thought for the needs of the souls of his family. "What do ye more than others?"

Parents are God's own appointed teachers. Religious training cannot be done by proxy. God lays upon every parent the solemn obligation: "Bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." Parents who neglect the religious training of their children, or leave it solely to some one else, deny to themselves the

greatest privilege this world offers and rob their children of their heaven-born right. They may provide amply for their bodily needs ; make denials that their children may have many of the luxuries of life ; they may be scrupulous as to their mental training ; but if they fail in their religious duty they have failed in everything. " For what doth it profit a man, to gain the whole world, and forfeit his life ? " God has given you these dear ones for time—and it may be for eternity—if you do your duty now ; but if not, it may be that God will require their souls at your hands in the day of judgment. Many have mourned their neglect with much anguish of spirit after it was too late. The saddest experiences of my ministerial life have come when it has fallen to my lot to try to comfort those whose children had died without having made a personal choice of Christ. Much more might be said on this point, but we draw the curtain here. Will not parents remember : " Behold, now is the acceptable time ; behold, now is the day of salvation " ?

This is the work of Sunday-school teachers. It is often the case that the Sunday-school teacher has a closer touch with the religious life of the child than has the parent. It is the natural thing for the child to have great admiration for, and confidence in, the teacher. When this is true, what a power the teacher can be in the life of the

child! The wise teacher holds the key that unlocks the inner door of the soul through which God enters to abide forever. It was the faithful efforts of a Sunday-school teacher that led Robert Morrison, the first Protestant missionary to China, to accept Christ. That teacher multiplied her power a thousand times in the salvation and training of that boy. Mr. Wanamaker has very tersely said: "When you save a man or a woman you save a unit; but when you save a boy or a girl you save a whole multiplication table."

Teachers need a vision of the possibilities that lie within their reach. That teacher had such a vision who, when he came into the presence of the boys of his class, would remove his hat, because he said that some day one of those boys might be the Prime Minister of England. There may be in your class now a boy who shall some day be the pastor of the very church which he is now attending; or one who shall in years to come be the governor of the state; or another whose voice shall be heard in the halls of Congress. There may be in your class a girl who shall be the messenger of the glad tidings of salvation in foreign lands; or another who shall be an active Christian worker in her own community which no doubt in the eyes of God is just as good as the other. Whether these or not, you have within your reach those whose lives

may be greatly influenced by you. Let us ever keep in mind this fact: that twenty-five years hence the affairs of the nation will be largely in the hands of those who are now the boys and girls of the Sunday-school. This thought alone should stir us to the most vigorous and prayerful effort.

The end and aim of all teaching is to lead the pupils to a definite, intelligent acceptance of Jesus as Saviour. You may inspire, instruct, and entertain them, but if your work stops here you have failed to lead them to the highest possible good. All teaching should be of such a character as to form the foundation for a life of faith and service to Christ. "If nurture," says Mrs. Lamoreaux, "has cared for the spiritual life of the child, he will probably desire during this period (nine to fifteen) to publicly confess his love for Jesus Christ. Even if he has not been so nurtured, every condition in his life makes it easier now than it ever will be to lead him to acceptance of Christ." Some years ago at a great theological seminary in the South, the president took a census of the students, then numbering nearly three hundred, as to the respective ages at which they were converted. The ages ranged from eight to twenty-seven years, the average being fifteen and a half years. This means that a great many were converted under the age of fifteen, for the few

that came into the kingdom late in life brought up the average considerably. This also argues that had not these young men given their hearts to Christ when they were boys, they probably never would have become His ministers. If a decision for Christ is not made early in life, the chances for doing so become less as the years go by, and they become less susceptible to good impressions, and thus become hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. The teacher who appreciates these facts will be more prayerful and painstaking in leading the pupils to become Christians in the days of their youth—God's own appointed time for giving the heart to Him.

Let the teacher be wise in making an appeal to those in his class to give themselves to the Lord. It is a great mistake never to make an evangelistic appeal. It is also a mistake to make it continually. Never to make an appeal reveals the fact that the teacher is either too timid, or cares too little about the salvation of the pupils—both of which is inexcusable and is likely to result in the loss of immortal souls. The oft-repeated appeal which meets with no response is apt to become perfunctory on the part of the teacher, and has a tendency to produce a hardening effect on those who hear it. But if there be the right sort of teaching and praying, along with a sympathetic personal contact, we need not be fearful of results. It has been my observation

for some years past that the converts from the Sunday-school were chiefly from classes whose teachers were burdened for the salvation of their pupils. If there be an incompetent, worldly-minded teacher in the Sunday-school, and an indifferent parent at home, it is next to impossible for a pastor or any one else to lead a child to confess Christ. Far be it from me to discourage any faithful teacher; my only aim is to help teachers to appreciate the magnitude of their work, and to seek that spiritual equipment that shall make them winners of souls. The teacher who does such a work will have abundant joy in this life, and a crown of rejoicing in the day of Jesus Christ. "And he that is wise winneth souls."

This is also the work of the superintendent. He can be a mighty force if he has the evangelistic spirit; he can be a mighty hindrance if he be indifferent. If he does not believe in the conversion of children, he can do much to thwart the plans and efforts of the earnest teacher or pastor. He does not have to say or do very much, except to say and do nothing that will help. Just indifference alone will do its deadly work in keeping souls out of the kingdom. On the other hand, the zealous, pious, wide-awake superintendent will do much in leading the unsaved to Jesus. How easy and natural it is for him to drive home a point in the lesson that will make the pupils understand more clearly

their obligation to God! How timely are his words immediately before the pastor is to make an evangelistic appeal, in which he makes clear the duty of each one present to hear, believe, and obey the words of God's message! How his face beams with holy joy as he witnesses the return of the lost to the heavenly fold! I can truly thank God for the faithful superintendents whom He has given me to coöperate in the blessed work of winning the children to Jesus.

Let the superintendent look upon his school with the vision of Jesus, who "when He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion for them." As he looks into the happy faces of the children and young people before him it may be hard for him to realize that perhaps many of them are lost. But there is such a thing as being lost even in a Sunday-school. One Sunday morning two ladies came to the door of the church, where I was then pastor in St. Louis, in great excitement, saying that a little child had been lost—that they had searched at all the neighbours and had failed to find it—and wondered if it had come into the Sunday-school with some other children. I bade them come in and search through the school to see whether the little one was there. And sure enough, up among the "primaries" we found him sitting unperturbed and happy. As the mother led out the little truant, upbraiding him for his recalcitrance, I

remarked to her that if her son should ever be lost again I hoped that she would always find him in a Sunday-school. The incident set me to thinking: that in all our Sunday-schools there are some who are lost—not in the sense this little one was—but lost to the heavenly Father who longs for their return to Him. He feels an infinitely greater concern for every human soul than any parent can feel for his own child. So great was His anxiety for lost humanity that He gave His only begotten Son to save them.

A whole community will be thrown into a panic by the report that a child is lost; yet even Christian people express little concern when they know that those out of Christ are lost. Near my boyhood home in the country, a boy about my own age wandered away from home and could not be found. The news spread like wild-fire; searching parties went out in all directions; every nook and cranny was thoroughly searched for miles around. For a part of two days the search was carried on without avail; hearts went out in sympathy for the grief-stricken mother. It was the afternoon of the second day; many had begun to despair, and were forecasting that the worst had happened. About the middle of the afternoon shouts were heard from one of the searching parties. Our party stood still breathlessly listening. In a short time, it was evident that they had reached the home. After a brief

silence the voice of a woman was heard ringing out on the autumn air. What could it mean? Had the unfortunate boy been brought home dead or alive? Was the voice that of the mother in heartrending grief, or was it the sound of rejoicing? We hastened to the home as fast as our horses could carry us. The boy was there, not dead but alive, and the shout we had heard was that of victory. "Even so," says Jesus, "I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over the one sinner that repenteth."

This is the work of the pastor. The ministry that overlooks the children is lacking in one of the vital elements of success. The pastor who does not labour for the salvation of the children ignores the example of Jesus and disobeys His last great command: "Preach the Gospel to every creature." Some pastors seem to think it beneath their dignity to include "these little ones" in their ministry. Mr. Spurgeon was once heard to say: "Sirs, I tell you that in God's sight he is no preacher who does not care for the children." The disciple is not above his Lord in any respect, and if Jesus our Master and Lord took special interest in the children we should too. Some even depreciate the conversion of children, so that when one comes to Jesus they think very little of it. Often when reports go in to the papers, special pride is taken

in reporting, "all adults," "no children," or, "only a few children," which is taken to indicate that the report would have to be discounted in proportion to the number of children who had professed faith in Jesus. Is not that an unjust discrimination against those of whom Jesus said: "See that ye despise not one of these little ones: for I say unto you, that in heaven their angels do always behold the face of My Father who is in heaven"?

A good place for the pastor to begin this important work is *in the home*. The ministry is gaining some ground in the work of breaking down the wall of partition between them and the children. Perhaps this is one way of accounting for the fact that children are becoming Christians at an earlier age than in former years. Let the pastor be free and easy with the children. They did not feel cramped or embarrassed in the presence of the greatest Preacher that ever lived, and why should they be so in our presence? If they are, then we may be sure that something is wrong with us; therefore, let us make haste to remove that which may become a bar to their salvation. The pastor should be able to converse entertainingly upon every subject that touches and interests the life of the child. Let him seek to win their confidence and love. On the street he should be able to recognize them and call them by name, and now and then, have

a pleasant word with them, and in every way make them feel that he is their friend. "The man who never tried the companionship of a little child has carelessly passed by one of the great pleasures of life, as one passes a rare flower without plucking it or knowing its value." So he who neglects a ministry to the children, knows not the highest joys that can come to him in this present life.

The Sunday-school offers an excellent opportunity for the pastor and people to work together in winning the young to Christ. It is well, now and then, to arrange for a special evangelistic service in connection with the teaching service Sunday morning. Previous to this service, the pastor should hold a conference with the teachers and officers that all may have a clear understanding as to the object of this service and the methods of attaining it. Discuss individual cases and let special prayers be offered. Immediately before the service the teachers and officers, and any others who might be interested, would do well to have a brief season of prayer. A part of the usual program can be dispensed with, leaving twenty minutes or more for the special service. The teachers can do much towards making this meeting a success by urging the claims of Christ upon the non-professing members of their classes. Let the talks, songs, prayers—all be evangelistic. In a service

of this kind there should be snap, push, life, variety; for if there is anything that children dislike it is a religious service that is "draggy," or "pokey," or one that is too stilted or formal. Let the service be natural, earnest, reverential. At the close of the talk by the pastor, an appeal should be made for a definite surrender to Christ. Some of the meetings like this have been the happiest and most fruitful of my ministry.

"Heaven came down our souls to greet,
And glory crowned the mercy seat."

In a work so important as this there are some cautions to be taken :

First, the common practice of *speaking to children as though they were all but little angels* is a mistake. Those who speak thus know that it is not true, and the children know it too; then why assume a false position? Is it not better to take without any assumption whatever the plain teaching of the Scriptures, "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God"? What is needed on the part of the child is conviction, faith, decision, obedience, and nothing but the truth will produce them. If children are made to imagine that they are little angels, then they cannot be made to see their need of a Saviour; for Jesus is a Saviour from sin, or He is nothing at all. "And thou shalt call His name JESUS; for it is He that shall save the people from their

sins." He is not a mere hero to be worshipped and admired; not a mere teacher, excelling all others in the wisdom of His words and in the purity of His doctrines; not a mere wonder-worker, eliciting applause from a curious throng; but He is the Redeemer and Saviour of all mankind, because He gave His "life a ransom for many." When children are led to the foot of the cross, and given a vision of the suffering Saviour, and, under the power of the Holy Spirit, are made to feel their need of Him, it is then that they are most likely to give their hearts to Him.

We must guard against *playing upon the emotions* of the child. It is easy enough to move them to tears and even to public confession by a few pathetic stories; but a child has not been benefited by such action, if it be not intelligent. The history of the revivals of the past shows that emotionalism and physical demonstrations are not healthy religious signs. This wise word of warning is given in "The Unfolding Life": "Care must be taken not to overstimulate feeling, as an excess beyond that which is expended in action has an after weakening and reactionary effect. This has its illustration in certain kinds of evangelistic work with the children, where the results are measured by the hysterical condition when the meeting concludes." Many persons, young and old, have been led to act on impulse,

rather than on intelligent faith and conviction and have afterwards come to doubt the genuineness of their conversion.

Children are prone to "follow the crowd." Because of this fact and for other reasons, it is usually best not to have the "primaries" present at services of this kind. We as pastors must endeavour to control conditions in such a way that it will not be too easy for those who are not in earnest or not sufficiently instructed to come into the church. On the other hand we must exercise great care not to offend one of these little ones who would follow the Lord Jesus. If they evince a Christian's faith and a Christian's obedience then they ought to have a Christian's privilege. It is well, however, to have a heart to heart talk with the parent or guardian before the child is received for church-membership. It often saves embarrassment, and also affords another means of doing personal work. A wise pastor and a good corps of personal workers can do much to prevent mistakes in these matters.

Last of all, *children need to be encouraged.* A more serious blunder cannot be made than to hinder a child in his efforts to lead a Christian life. Jesus has warned us of the awful consequences to those who cause one of those little ones who believe in Him to stumble. Sometimes they are hindered by a lack of encouragement; again, by an unsympathetic bearing towards the

child when interested ; or, by a reproachful word at the time when interest is evidenced ; sometimes by unreasonable demands : that the child must live a perfect life, that he shall know that he is going to " hold out faithful," that he must give up all his childish pleasures, that he shall have a thorough knowledge of the " plan of salvation," and that he must be able to " relate his Christian experience " in a manner that would do credit to pious Brother B. who had been " relating " his for the past forty years. Such demands, from those who have no right to make them, have a tendency to discourage the child and make him feel that the Christian life is an impossible thing for him. Let us rather instruct and encourage them, remembering the words of our Lord Jesus when He said : " Whoso shall receive one such little child in My name receiveth Me."

X

Wisdom in Soul-Winning

There are men who have remarkable powers of persuasion at an election, who yet say they cannot urge men to decision for Christ. If you have influenced a man to vote as he ought to vote for the good of his country, you should be able to win a man for Christ.—*G. Campbell Morgan.*

It is not the first business of the Christian teacher to furnish men with a creedal religion ready-made,—but rather to put and keep men on the clue, as we have called it, wherein under the tuition of the Spirit they themselves will discover the truth they need.—*Henry C. Mabie.*

Equipment for soul-winning is by way of spiritual power rather than by studied process. Your words will never win unless your life is winsome. A wrong life will never win to a right life. The chief equipment of the soul-winner is not a string of Bible verses, but a Christlike life. It is the man or woman back of the words that gives them force.

—*Henry Alford Porter.*

We must learn from Him the priceless worth of a single human life. We must see in ourselves, and in others, the image of God, despoiled and defaced, but still enough to show that we are born for the love of God. We must see the sacredness of the soul, and in every conflict take the side of the soul against sense. We must serve our generation by the will of God. We must bend to the yoke of Christ. We must be rich towards God at all costs, whatever else. We must see the spiritual value of life, and in all decisions choose the better part. We must have our lives inspired by the gracious pity and the tender love of our Master.—*Hugh Black.*

X

WISDOM IN SOUL-WINNING

“Come ye after Me, and I will make you to become fishers of men.”—*Mark i. 17.*

IF we would be wise in the work of winning others to Christ, *we must appreciate the value of human souls.* Such a value cannot be measured by human standards. In this great commercial age nearly everything is measured by commercial standards: name, affections, life itself, are measured by material values. But the human soul is priceless above all earthly things; therefore, he who engages in the work of saving men is performing the most exalted service known to mortal man. Even the angels of heaven have not the privilege of doing the work that a redeemed soul may do. “And he that winneth souls is wise” (Prov. xi. 30).

We all prize human life highly, but we should prize a human soul more highly still. Let us hope that we are growing in our appreciation as to the value of both the life and the soul. Our own country is known as a nation of disasters, but we are striving to place more safeguards around human life. Neglect or carelessness which resulted in the loss of life was once looked

upon as a matter of fact and little attention was given to the placing of the blame. But now the offender is held accountable almost as much as would be a criminal. Public sentiment is growing stronger against neglect which causes the loss of life; our legislative bodies are making the laws in such cases more stringent that human life may be better protected; our courts and officers are becoming more strict in the enforcement of such laws, and in the punishment of offenses, which have caused the loss of life or limb. Mr. Carnegie's "Hero Fund" will have its weight, no doubt, by impressing upon the minds of people generally the sacredness of human life.

As we advance in the scale of civilization we come to appreciate more and more the value of human life. This, of course, is due to the influence of the teachings of Jesus. We have not yet attained that high state of development which we shall some day attain under the Messiah's reign when the people "shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." May the time speedily come when man shall no longer look upon his brother as did wicked Cain to slay him, but as did Jesus who died to save him. And yet, in the light of present conditions, we are forced to ask the question: Do Christian people place as high an estimate on human souls

as does the world generally on human lives? Do we manifest the same anxious concern when immortal souls are in peril that we do when human lives are endangered? Recently our whole country was shocked by the awful mine disaster at Cherry, Ill., when some three hundred men were entombed within a burning mine. Our hearts were made sick as we read the details of that terrible catastrophe; our deepest sympathies went out for those unfortunate creatures, most of whom died before the rescuers could reach them. Now are we as deeply concerned when we know that souls are entombed within the prison house of sin—locked up, as it were, by their own lusts and sinful natures, doomed to eternal death unless they are speedily rescued?

Christian people need to have a deeper conviction as to the reality of the death from which the sinner is to be saved. How awful is the death of a man in a burning mine! More awful still is the death of a soul condemned in sin! Are we fully conscious of the fact that souls out of Christ are dead in trespasses and sins? People do not have to die to be lost; if they are out of Christ they are lost now. "He that believeth not hath been judged already, because he hath not believed on the name of the only begotten Son of God" (John iii. 18). People need to be saved from something, else why a Saviour? "And thou shalt call His name JESUS; for He it is that

shall save His people from their sins" (Matt. i. 21). Jesus is the Saviour of men because He delivers them from the power of sin and its consequences, which is death. As physical death is a separation of the spirit from the body so spiritual death is a separation of the spirit from God. The sinner is thus separated from God even in this life. It is the part of wisdom that we rescue him now lest that separation be eternal.

If we would rise to the highest conception as to the worth of a soul then we must behold the human soul, as it were, through the eyes of the Creator. The record of creation shows that special importance was given to the creation of man. He was a creature destined to be God's representative on earth, made in His image and likeness, and clothed with authority to rule the visible world. How truly could the poet of poets say: "What a piece of work is man! How noble in reason! how infinite in faculties! in form and moving how express and admirable! in action, how like an angel! in apprehension, how like a god!" But the divine conception excels that of any human being. "I will make a man more precious than fine gold; even more than the golden wedge of Ophir" (Isa. xiii. 12). "What is man that Thou art mindful of him? Or the son of man, that Thou visitest him? Thou madest him a little lower than the angels; Thou crownedst him with glory and honour, and Thou

didst set him over the work of Thy hands: Thou didst put all things in subjection under his feet" (Heb. ii. 6-8). But man through transgression fell short of his destiny. God did not desire that man should fail utterly. So, through His Son, God offers to fallen man the ideal which He lost in the fall. In Jesus Christ may be realized the highest type of perfection. Christ is God's estimate of what a man may become through faith. The worth of a soul is shown by what Christ did for man by His atoning death. And when we once come to view lost men from the divine side we will be willing to do more to rescue them from eternal death and to save them to eternal life. "Let him know that he who converteth a sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall cover a multitude of sins" (James v. 20).

The wise soul-winner will seek the highest qualifications for such a work. It is the greatest work in the world and, therefore, requires the greatest skill and the most thorough preparation. The architect who designs a great steel bridge over some river must know what he is doing. There can be no conjectures or mere guesses. Too much is at stake for anything but the most accurate knowledge and skill to be used. Likewise, he who would direct the construction of a great canal must possess qualifications for that particular work. He who would lead an army

to victory must be skilled in the things of war. He who would pilot the ship must know the course he takes. So he who would bring souls to Jesus should have some preparation for that great work. It is not to be wondered at that some fail as soul-winners for they have never sought preparation for the important task.

First in importance in the preparation of the soul-winner is *a personal knowledge of Christ as Saviour*. We mean by this that one must experience a work of grace in his own heart before he can successfully lead others to such an experience. Once a young lady came to me at the close of the Sunday-school hour saying that she would like to teach a class in the Sunday-school. Her offer was declined because she had never given herself to Christ. For her to have attempted to teach a class of boys or girls would have been but the blind leading the blind, for she was lacking in the first prerequisite for the teacher, namely, a surrender of her own will to Christ. Without this one essential all efforts to lead others to a personal knowledge of Christ will be empty and vain. Andrew first found Jesus himself and then he brought his own brother to Him. First find the Lord yourself and then you may go out and bring others to Him.

Nothing is more essential in the soul-winner than *a knowledge of the Word of God*. Other

information may be valuable and can be used with good effect, but a knowledge of the Bible is of prime importance. It is not sufficient to be able to use bits and fragments of it here and there but a general knowledge is imperative. For example, a worker who would turn to the Old Testament to find I Corinthians would accomplish about as much as would a carpenter in attempting to cut a piece of wood in two with the back of his saw. I have been pained to witness the utter ignorance of otherwise intelligent Christians as to the general idea, purpose, and arrangement of the books of the Bible. Such a knowledge is possible for the average disciple of Jesus, and if we are true disciples (a *disciple* is a *learner*) then it should be our delight to learn more of God's truth that we may enjoy and use it for His glory.

Many are loud in their praises of the Bible, avowing their confidence in its trustworthiness, professing their fondness for it, acknowledging their admiration of it, yet actually knowing very little about it. They all but worship it and look upon it as a sort of fetish without which they would not be safe for an hour. They give it a conspicuous place on the mantle or centre-table, especially when expecting a visit from the preacher, but as to an intelligent use of it they are wholly destitute. They have the most vague and imperfect conceptions as to

what the Bible really is. One of our enterprising American manufacturers sent a new plow as a present to a certain tribe in South Africa. The natives were delighted with their new possession. They took it and planted it upright in the ground, painted it red and worshipped it as a god. They did the best they knew in the light of the knowledge they had, but quite missed the purpose of this instrument of utility. We give the Bible a place in our lives and, indeed, do attempt to make some use of it, but what a blunder some of us make in our attempt to use it aright!

We must not only have a general knowledge of the Scriptures but we must *know how to use it for specific ends*. Paul's exhortation comes with great force to us: "Give diligence to present thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, handling aright the word of truth" (2 Tim. ii. 15). The term, *handling aright*, is significant. It means, literally, to cut out in a straight line; and doubtless has reference to the cutting out the different pieces, as of a garment, so as to make them fit. Paul being a tent-maker would naturally borrow and use the term figuratively. Practically, it means to know how and when to use the various parts of the Word—to use the Word in such a manner as to meet the needs of individuals.

He is wise who knows how to use the Scriptures so as to let God speak His own message

direct to the heart of that individual. For instance, to one who is *indifferent*, turn to Heb. ii. 2, and I Peter iv. 18; if he *does not think himself a sinner* let him read Rom. iii. 10-23; to the *skeptical* read John iii. 18; I John v. 10; Rev. xxi. 8; to the *anxious inquirer* read John iii. 16, 36; to one *burdened with the sense of sin* read Isa. i. 18; John vi. 37; I John i. 9, 10; to the *moralist* read Luke xviii. 22; John x. 1 f.; Rom. iii. 20; to one *who fears he will not hold out* read John v. 24; John x. 28, 29; Rom. viii. 35; Heb. vii. 25; to one *who fears what others will say* read Luke xii. 8, 9; Acts v. 29; to one *who sees no need of public confession* read Rom. x. 9; Matt. x. 32; to one *who believes but does not know his duty* read Matt. xvi. 24; Acts ii. 38; Rom. vi. 4-14; to one *who thinks there is no necessity for his uniting with the church* read Acts ii. 41, 42; John xiv. 15; I John iii. 13; to one *who lacks assurance* read John vii. 17; I John iv. 12; I John v. 4; to the *backslider* read 2 Peter ii. 21, 22; Luke ix. 62; James iv. 8-10. This list of subjects and reference is not meant to be exhaustive, only suggestive. There is Scripture to meet each individual case if we only know how to find and use it. The Sword of the Spirit is a mighty weapon when wielded skillfully and it is our privilege thus to use it.

Next in importance to a knowledge of the

Bible is *a knowledge of human nature*. It was said of the greatest of soul-winners that "He Himself knew what was in man." While we cannot hope to have the deep insight into character that Jesus had, yet it behooves us to study character that we may be wise in our dealing with people. There is an avenue of approach to each soul if we can but find it. We need to pray for wisdom that we may find the key that unlocks the door to the inner being of the one whom we would win to Jesus. "But if any of you lacketh wisdom, let him ask of God, . . . and it shall be given him" (James i. 5). Let us remember that those in error need a guide, but we must not attempt to guide them against their own wills. We must first put them at ease with us. The unsaved, as a rule, are timid and sensitive; we should be careful lest we frighten, anger, or wound them. Let us ever bear in mind that we are to *win* them and not to *drive* them to Jesus. For this reason *it is not well to argue* questions with the unsaved. It is seldom, if ever, that an argument results in a conversion. Let the unsaved know that there is something more important than argument, namely, his own salvation. Let God's Word settle all questions that may arise. Yet we may at all times say: "Come now, and let us reason together."

We should *never approach the unsaved with anything like levity*. For one to approach two

unsaved men, for example, and say to them that he has a notion to bump their heads together because they do not become Christians, is to belittle the matter of becoming a Christian. Or to say to an unbeliever, jestingly, "You're a good one," or "We'll get you yet," or "You're a hard case," is not likely to deepen his conviction or bring him any nearer Christ. There should be such an earnestness in every word and bearing of the soul-winner as to make the unsaved feel that the matter of his salvation is the supreme interest of his life—for it is. It is not a thing to jest about for it is a matter of life and death. Let them know that your "heart's desire and prayer to God" is that they may be saved, and you will be more likely to win them.

Yet we must guard against the other extreme: *undue emotion*. For an emotional Christian woman to throw her arms around a young girl who is not a Christian and give way to tears and ejaculations is but to excite and confuse the girl, and if she does take any public stand for Christ it is not intelligent and the action is likely to become a source of regret in after life rather than a joyful memory. There is no work in all the world in which there is more need for good, practical common sense than in the service of soul-winning. To a band of soul-winners long ago was given the sane and practical exhortation, "Be ye therefore wise as serpents and harmless as doves."

He who would win others from the ways of sin and error must have a *sympathetic heart*. He must not be impatient, harsh, or denunciatory. Some ministers seem never so much at home as when pronouncing the doom of the wicked and unbelieving. It is said of the great Moody that he could not speak of the lost without tears in his eyes, so great was his compassion for them. We must be able to enter into sympathy with the sinner and remember that we were once sinners. Do we forget that we were once indifferent to the divine call? that we hardened our hearts in unbelief? that we were callous to gospel entreaties? that we resisted the wooings of the gentle Spirit? that we shut out the light of heaven from our souls until God, as it were, reached down and in His love took hold of us and lifted us out of the miry clay and set our feet on the solid rock of Christ Jesus?

Then let us sympathize with the sinner and by prayer and persuasion let us love him into the kingdom of God. In his splendid little book, "The Passion for Souls," Rev. J. H. Jowett very aptly says: "We can never heal the wounds we do not feel. Tearless hearts can never be the heralds of the Passion. We must pity if we would redeem. We must bleed if we would be the ministers of the saving blood. We must perfect by our passion the Passion of the Lord, and by our own suffering sympathies we must

‘fill up that which is behind in the sufferings of Christ.’”

The Christian world must realize *the power of the personal touch*. Recent investigations and experiments have revealed some marvellous phenomena in the realm of personal magnetism; and the results thus far only emphasize the vastness of the unexplored field in that realm of science. But this much is true, that the power of one personality over another is very great, either for good or evil, as the case may be. And one peculiar thing about this mysterious power is that we all possess it, so that we all become human props, as it were; when one falls, others fall with him; when one rises, others rise with him. “For none of us liveth to himself, and none dieth to himself” (Rom. xiv. 7). Every Christian needs to realize that he has an influence that may be exerted for the good of others. The humblest believer in the land may lead some one to Jesus if he will but try. In the past, soul-winning has been too much a professional matter. People have left that work chiefly to the preachers and paid workers. I have had sinners say to me, “Oh, it is all right for you to talk to me about this matter, for that is your business.” I have sometimes coveted the privilege of doing personal work as a layman once more, not that I would cease to be a preacher of the Gospel for one minute, but that I might

go to others simply as one interested in their soul's welfare and not with semblance of professionalism.

Would that Christian people everywhere would wake up to the fact that soul-winning is their great privilege and their duty as well as that of the minister's! We hail with joy great movements like "The Laymen's Missionary Movement" and "The Man by Man Mission" which have for their object the winning of others to Christ abroad and at home. Surely a new spirit of missionary activity is upon us; and let us pray that the time may soon come when it shall be said of our age even in a fuller sense as was said of the apostolic age: "They therefore that were scattered abroad went about preaching the word" (Acts viii. 4).

He is wisest who strives for the highest ends. Many are spending their lives on that which is emptiness and nothingness when they might be having the best. The greatest of all promises is to the soul-winner because his is the greatest of all services. If Christian people could only see this and strive for God's best instead of receiving the reward of their own folly! Think of the reward of the soul-winner! Our poor minds cannot comprehend it. It is difficult to speak the language of heaven to mortals. The inspired prophet doubtless sought from the realm of this world a symbol that would express

in a measure *the soul-winner's reward*; but he found it not. At last his inspired vision swept the dome of heaven with its many splendid lights, one star differing from another star in glory, and there he found an adequate symbol: "And they that are wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars forever and ever" (Dan. xii. 3).

XI

Convert Culture

Most converts—yes, most believers as well—need line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little, to make them able to give a reason for the hope that is in them. It is a great thing to be established and stand fast in the faith; and, in order to do this, nothing, it is safe to say, is so essential as the organizing of young converts into classes for stated and continuous instruction in the Word. It is not too much to say that, without this, it is impossible to secure satisfactory results in evangelistic work, or growth and power in the Christian life.—*E. P. Goodwin.*

It is earnestly believed that our churches would gain strength in every way if the pastors would at once arrange for a series of teaching services week by week, wherein they might carefully discuss before all their people, especially the young, the fundamental doctrines of the Bible. Such a series of services would kindle a general interest in the study of the Bible such as we have not seen before, and thus would the faith of God's people be strengthened and their zeal for His work augmented in a way not otherwise possible. Surely, this is a consummation most devoutly to be desired.

—*George W. Truett.*

There are three things for which the one who would make a success of the Christian life must especially pray: First, for wisdom, "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God" (James i. 5); second, for strength, "But they that wait for Jehovah shall renew their strength" (Isa. xl. 31); third, for the Holy Spirit, "Your heavenly Father shall give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him" (Matt. xi. 13). If you have not received the baptism of the Holy Spirit you should offer definite prayer for this definite blessing and definitely expect to receive it. If you have already received the baptism of the Holy Spirit you should with each new emergency of Christian work pray to God for a new filling with the Holy Spirit.—*R. A. Torrey.*

XI

CONVERT CULTURE

THERE is so much involved in the Great Commission that it is quite natural that we should overlook some portions of it; but the surprise is that we have overlooked so important a part, namely, "teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." This leads us to conclude that the full import of the last Great Command has not yet been grasped by the Christian world. A little more than a century ago there was an awakening as to the great missionary idea contained in the Great Commission when William Carey became the leading spirit in the world's evangelization. We have in a measure comprehended the meaning of the first half of the Command, "Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." Let us hope that in the century to come we shall rise to a higher conception of the second part of the Commission which is coördinate with and equal to the first part.

"The person who is discipled and baptized is only started in a course of Christian living.

Notice that it is not simply teaching the commandments of Christ, but teaching them to observe His commandments. They who disciple and baptize men must teach them the duty of obeying Christ in all things, and the Christian instructor has fallen short of his task unless those whom he is called to instruct have both learned what Christ's commandments are, and have learned to observe them." So speaks Dr. J. A. Broadus in his "Commentary on Matthew." Much of the work of *discipling* has not included that of *teaching*; and much of the work of teaching has ignored that of discipling. We need a better adjustment of these two important tasks. We must not relax in our zeal for making disciples but we must increase in our zeal for "teaching them." There is no doubt that the best way to inspire more zeal in the work of discipling will be to teach and train the disciples we already have. It is but natural for one to enjoy doing that which he is trained to do well.

The carrying out of the second half of the Great Commission is far more difficult than the performing of the first half. It requires more patience, skill, preparation, and persistent effort than any other form of Christian service. We have not magnified its importance as we should have done. Many now shrink from it because of the difficulties connected with it. It does not appeal to some because they cannot tabulate re-

sults. An evangelist after a two weeks' meeting with a church can tabulate larger results than can many a pastor on the same field after several years of hard work in teaching and training the people. "One sows and another reaps." The fault is not altogether with one but with both, perhaps. If the pastor did a little more evangelizing and the evangelist a little more teaching the results would be more nearly equal.

In the present age we have gone to the extreme on counting numbers, and attach too little value to the things which cannot be set down in a column of statistics. But much of the best service cannot thus be estimated. Only a very small part of what our Saviour did was ever recorded. "And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself would not contain the books that should be written" (John xxi. 25). It is the spirit of Jesus for us to do His will whatever that may be, whether the results of our service can be recorded or not. This is an age of great things; and we have come to think and to speak in great numbers. It is well that we have great ideas to think about and great things to speak about, but let us not undervalue the things that do not appear great in the eyes of men. This is Jesus' last Great Command and we need to recognize that every part of it as well as the whole of it is great.

The wisdom of training others for service is seen in the example of Jesus. We see Him gathering about Him those early disciples who had various capacities and temperaments, and who were selected from the different walks of life, that He might train them for His service. And we may be sure that it was no easy task to awaken their sleeping intellects, break down their stubborn prejudices, eradicate their materialistic ideas of the kingdom, and elevate and purify their conceptions of the one true God. The greater part of His ministry was given to this kind of work, and we know that He was often grieved because of their slowness of heart as from time to time He put them to the test as to their understanding and progress. Yet with all its difficulties and disappointments the Great Teacher saw the importance of such a work and spent His strength upon it. And we dare not conjecture the results of His earthly ministry after His death and ascension had He not laid the foundation for a future world-religion in the minds of those humble men whom He taught, rebuked, exhorted, amazed, and inspired, during those weary years of toil and sacrifice. Did it pay? Look at what Christianity is to-day and the question is answered. "Blessed are the eyes which see the things that ye see."

Convert culture occupied a large part of Paul's ministry. He had the ability to dis-

cover and use good men and women. At Antioch he finds Silas; at Lystra, Timothy; at Derbe, Gaius; at Troas, Luke; in Berea, Sopater; in Corinth, Erastus, Aquila and Priscilla; thus it was wherever he went he was on the alert for helpers. On this point, Rev. Chalmers Martin says in "Apostolic and Modern Missions": "Few things contributed more directly to his success than this faculty for utilizing others in the work of the Gospel, this power to attract and bind to himself, to train and direct, a great company of colabourers, through whom he multiplied himself a hundredfold."

That which was true of the great missionary to the Gentiles has been *true of all other great missionaries* since his day: the ability to discover, train, and direct others in the work of spreading the Gospel is one of the essential qualifications of the missionary. Such has been the history of every missionary who has made his work permanent. The methods in modern missions are in essence the same as those employed in apostolic times. "Missionaries of to-day lay great stress upon preaching," says Rev. Chalmers Martin, "but they are not, and, in the face of the needs of heathenism and of the churches in heathen lands, they cannot be, content to be preachers simply. With the first successes gained by the truth they find themselves called to be more than preachers—apostles, bishops, superin-

tendents, having oversight of a plurality of churches and expanding the work." It is very difficult for those of us who are at home to realize the task of the missionary in the way of training and directing converts. It is absolutely essential to their success.

The same principle holds true in our work at home: those churches in which there is a great deal of teaching are found to produce the most permanent results. Many a pastorate has appeared to be most flourishing under the leadership of certain gifted men, but after they had gone there was little that remained as a witness to the permanency of their work. The pastor was not lacking in the gift of speech, perhaps, nor in his power to interest and hold his congregations, neither was he lacking in social qualities, nor was his ministry barren of fruits, for many may have been added to the church roll. But look closely enough and likely you will find that the teaching element has been neglected. No ministry can be highly successful which neglects it.

A case in point will serve to emphasize the value of a teaching ministry. There is in a certain city a great church which has been for many years, and now is, the pride of its denomination. It can boast of a long line of noble pastors, its membership runs up into the thousands, its benevolences are astonishing, its departments and interests are varied, its missionary zeal is inspir-

ing, its evangelistic fervour unabating. One looks upon its splendid work and says, "How came it all about?" The question is easily answered, at least from the human point of view, when you go back a little into its history. You will find that some years ago a young pastor spent the best ten years of his life laying broad and deep foundations for a great church. One of the chief factors in that foundation work was the attention given to teaching and training the members of that church. This fact more than any other accounts for the power and usefulness of this church.

Next in importance to winning a soul to Christ is the training of that soul for service. As the apple tree must have the best care and nurture if it would bear the best fruit, so must the young convert be nurtured if he would bring forth the fruits of righteousness. Every believer has been ordained unto service. "I chose you, and appointed you, that ye should go and bear fruit" (John xv. 16). The highest purposes and ideals in the Christian life are attained only through training and development. Therefore, we should engage in this work for the rich blessing it will bring to the new convert, for the good he may do in the world because of that training, and for the glory he may reflect upon the name of his Master and Lord.

We should train believers for the very best service possible. It is said that the prime object

of our military and naval schools is to develop character for the kind of service the men are to perform. Our aim as ministers, teachers and churches is to develop character for service in the name of Christ. Every element of character needed to perform any good work is needed by the Christian: the alertness of the lawyer, the skill of the physician, the courage of the soldier, the discrimination of the artist, the mental acumen of the architect, the persuasiveness of the orator, the knowledge of the teacher, the ability of the commander, the wisdom of the philosopher, the humility and obedience of the servant are all needed in the service of King Jesus; and it should be our delight to develop these various elements as we discover them in different individuals. In this we will be emulating the example of the Great Teacher.

How shall the work of convert culture be done? This, after all, is where the "tug of war" comes in; but the spirit that keeps us tugging at it will enable us to find a way to do it. "Necessity is the mother of invention," it is said, and if we see the need of this important work the question as to how to do it is only a matter of individual effort. The present work is not intended to be a book on methods but rather to lead Christian workers everywhere to see the need of the things herein suggested; only hints as to methods are here and there given.

The pastor can do much towards nurturing young converts by his *preaching*. This he will do if he heeds Paul's admonition to Timothy: "Preach the word; be urgent in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all long-suffering and teaching." A large part of the preaching of Jesus was didactic. It is frequently said in the gospel narratives that He "taught" the people. He brought forth gems of truth from the Scriptures, which in many instances had been hidden beneath the rubbish of dead forms, and gave them a new setting and made them shine with a new lustre. The preacher must study how to make the truth beautiful, attractive, powerful; this he must do both by word and practice. The life should be a sermon; the sermon should be a light. Both sermon and life should be a light on duty, on the Bible, on God and Christ in their relation to the kingdom and the world. To be this, the life must be pure, gentle, lovable; the sermon must be intelligible to the weakest, inspirational to the strongest, and edifying to all.

Young believers need to be taught the fundamental doctrines of the Bible. They should know what they believe and why they believe it, "Being always ready to give answer to every man that asketh you a reason concerning the hope that is in you, yet with meekness and fear" (1 Pet. iii. 15). They need to be instructed as to

their duty to God and to the church of which they are members. The church with its ordinances, its doctrines, and its life is designed to be of infinite service to the believer, and, in addition to all this, the church offers the best opportunity for serving God. No life can be what it ought to be outside of the church. Therefore, the new convert needs to be impressed with the importance of church-membership, and to realize his obligation to support his church by his sympathy, his prayers, and his means.

The young convert should *be taught to use his talents in the service of Christ*. Many are timid and shrinking and need to be encouraged. Many are afraid of their own voices and must *learn self-mastery* before anything else; and they must keep in mind that intelligent, repeated effort will bring success. Many of the greatest preachers made awkward beginnings at public speaking. It will do them great good to *become witnesses* for Christ in public gatherings. This is one of God's appointed means for spiritual growth, and for blessing others. It is Christ's will that they shall become His witnesses. The believer must learn very early in his experience *the value of prayer*. Of course, there are some who will never pray in public, but more ought to pray than do. And in many cases it is the fault of the pastor and the church that they do not learn to pray. Many a Christian has looked back with

regret over a life almost wasted, as far as active service is concerned, because they did not make the right start. As it is the duty of the parent to see that the child has an even chance for success in life, so it is the duty of the church to see that its young converts have an opportunity to make a success of the Christian life.

The pastor can do much of the work of training but he cannot do it all. As has been elsewhere suggested, one of the regular services, say the prayer-meeting or young people's meeting, may be used to aid in the work of convert culture, especially after a revival where there has been an ingathering. Or a special class for this purpose may be formed which plan has some advantages over the other. But the ideal method is the personal instruction. When new converts are coming into the church at the regular services it is well to take them one by one, or two by two, and instruct them in the things of the Spirit. Here the pastor has opportunity for ascertaining the believer's difficulties, also his fitness for a particular kind of service. In this way a pastor may discover a teacher, a preacher, a missionary, or one who has gifts for service never dreamed of by any one.

The pastor must have the assistance of his people in this highly important work. The young convert is not likely to rise above the ideal which is set for him by the church. I fear

that the attitude of the average church-member towards the convert is more critical than sympathetic. We welcome believers into our fellowship with an indifference which bespeaks a lack of confidence. Our bearing is as much as to say: "Well, I hope you are converted, but I doubt it. I hope you will do better than the common run of young Christians, but I hardly expect it. Do the best you can and if you fall by the wayside we'll turn you out of the church and go on our way rejoicing." Now what could we expect from a young Christian who is received into the spiritual household under such conditions? "Now we that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves. . . . Wherefore receive ye one another, even as Christ also received you, to the glory of God" (Rom. xv. 1, 7).

The members have their part in nourishing the younger and weaker members who are within the fold. They can do much to stimulate interest in the regular services; they can encourage the timid ones to take up some regular task; or commend those who have already begun some definite work; or a lay member who is qualified might be given a class of young converts to teach and train in church work; or again, when special meetings are held for the benefit of new members, those who are older should urge the attendance of the younger,

and it would not be amiss for them to bear witness to the importance of such meetings by coming themselves.

If we have the interests of the younger members at heart we will find many ways in which to aid them. I call to mind an instance in which a brother was instrumental in leading a man who was his business acquaintance to Christ. He was not satisfied with seeing his friend brought into the church; he wanted to see him become not merely a Christian in name but a servant of Christ indeed. He took particular pains to instruct this new disciple in the doctrines of the church, and as to his duty as a Christian and encouraged him to take up active service at once. Thus was this young convert stimulated to make an excellent beginning in his Christian life. Because of business relations the lay brother was in a better position to help this friend than could have a minister of the Gospel. Would that more of our laymen had the qualifications and the desire to do this kind of service for Christ!

The one great need at the present hour is coöperation between pastors and churches in striving for the great ends set forth in the Great Commission, namely, evangelizing and teaching. This work cannot be left to pastors alone, for if it is, they will make miserable failures. And pastors are making failures in many

places throughout the land because of a lack of support by the people in the work in general. The editor of *The Interior* (Chicago) some time ago wrote a very timely article under the title: "If the Pastor Falls Down," in which he said, "Being just one human man on a job big enough for a half dozen superhumans, he's only too certain to fall down somewhere sooner or later." Then he goes on to enumerate the "abilities a minister's position demands of him": he must be an orator, a thinker, a "mixer," an organizer, a business man, a spiritually-minded man, a practical man. After dwelling on these points at some length the writer says: "Yet you're supposing that you've hired the whole combination in the pastor of your church, and are expecting to get the benefit of each of these various elements of strength—all out of one man. . . . Some day before long you'll find a weak side to him. . . . Every church when it calls a pastor ought to watch narrowly to see where he is going to fall down. But not to get a chance to complain—God forbid! When the pastor falls down, then the church has discovered where it can help him." Then the writer suggests that if the pastor is inefficient in any particular line—organization, finances, socially—then let those gifted in these things come to the pastor's rescue; even if he falls down on his preaching they can listen better, and praise and encourage him.

Finally he gives as a rule for a growing church :
“ Count on your pastor’s abilities as his chance ;
count on his inabilities as your chance.”

This idea of assisting the pastor, let us hope, will become more popular in the days that are to come. Pastors have some helpers, to be sure. Thank God for the “ faithful few ” ! May their tribe increase ! May the time soon come when pastors and churches shall march in a solid phalanx from conquest to conquest until “ The kingdom of this world is become the kingdom of our Lord ” (Rev. xi. 15). That day is sure to come for it is the promise of our Lord (Matt. vi. 10). But what are we doing to hasten the coming of that day—the day of our Lord and His Christ ? “ Wherefore girding up the loins of your mind, be sober and set your hope perfectly on the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ ; as children of obedience, not fashioning yourselves according to your former lusts in the time of your ignorance : but like as He who called you is holy, be ye yourselves also holy in all manner of living ; because it is written, Ye shall be holy ; for I am holy ” (1 Pet. i. 13-16).

XII

A Plea for Rural Evangelism

I am in favour of preaching the Gospel everywhere. Heretofore, the Baptists have had their greatest success in the country districts. Looking back on it now, I feel that they were guided by the spirit of the Lord. We owe nearly everything we have to their good work. I believe that the Baptists now have the strongest hold on country districts. The other denominations are losing ground in the country and we are losing some of our ground. What the Baptist churches of Missouri need most of all is country pastors that are able to do all the work of the pastoral office, including evangelism.

—*John Priest Greene.*

But the tendency towards the country and country life is a tendency that we ought to encourage in this country. It tends towards sane and philosophical and quiet consideration of the problems of life. It takes out that nervous exhaustion of energy, it takes out the gambling spirit; it takes out of the life of the citizen that hurry and rapidity that carries men quickly to their graves and makes for the happiness of individuals and families far greater than any trade or profession that brings you into the great maelstrom of life.—*William Howard Taft.*

Rural evangelism is the Macedonia of our present church life and there stands an angel from heaven crying, "Come over and help us." No vaster field is open to the church; no such important field has been given us to cultivate; no field will yield larger results; no field is more neglected; *no field cries louder for help.* Brethren, it is a heavenly visitor and has cried long and loud; will we heed or will we turn the deaf ear? Mr. Spurgeon once said, "It is not so much a question as to whether the heathen will be saved if they do not have the Gospel, but whether we will be saved if we do not send them the Gospel." It is not so much a question of the rural districts needing our help, but the church at large needing the help from the rural districts.—*E. L. Buchanan.*

XII

A PLEA FOR RURAL EVANGELISM

BY evangelism we mean the effective preaching of the Gospel to the unsaved. This includes not only winning of people to faith in the Lord Jesus but also winning them to His service. By rural evangelism we mean the preaching of the Gospel in its broadest significance to the people who live in country districts. This will, of course, mean evangelism in those communities where churches are maintained; those where church-houses now exist but without regular services; those where there are only schoolhouses; in fact, wherever people live outside of our cities and towns.

There is not so much evangelistic work done in the country now as formerly. This is largely because in recent years the great bulk of population has been drifting to the towns and cities and we have followed the crowd with our religious efforts, and have thus left the country people to wrestle with religious problems. The history of our country, including a history of the progress of Christianity, has been largely a recital of events connected with the development of a great "continental wilderness"; only in recent

years have the cities and towns played an important part in the nation's affairs. The future is likely to write history differently since the greater part of our people will be soon living in the cities. The proportion of population living in cities of 8,000 or more in the United States and Canada in 1901 was 40.40 per cent. According to the diagram submitted by Dr. Josiah Strong in "The Challenge of the Cities," it will be but a short time until the majority of the people in our country will be living in the cities. This means a growth intellectually and commercially, but not necessarily a corresponding growth morally and religiously.

The city and the nation at large needs the good influence which it may receive from the country. The world owes a great debt to the country people. Not only is the world supplied with its chief necessities in food and raiment from the products of the farm, but it owes much to the country from the moral and religious standpoint. In all great issues, political and social, where moral principles are involved, the country people are usually found to be on the right side. The influence of the people from rural districts may be reckoned from the fact that many of the leading citizens of the city are found to have been country boys. The rise of the country boy from some obscure place to a position of prominence and power is a story that can be repeated many

times over. You will find the country boy making a success in all the walks of life, in spite of the fact that he has often been held up to ridicule by his city cousin. Our nation will sustain a loss when there are no longer country boys to take the places now occupied by men who spent their early life in the country.

The importance of the country church as a factor in the making of our nation must not be lost sight of. Our Baptist people have always thrived in the country. Their success began there, but it did not end there. Although for many years Baptists shrank from entering the cities they are fast becoming the largest, wealthiest, and most influential among the city churches. In not a few instances the strength of our large city churches consists of men and women who have moved in from the country. It is thought by many that more than ninety per cent. of our Baptist preachers come from the country and small towns. These country churches have not only furnished pastors but missionaries, deacons, Sunday-school teachers and substantial contributors. The question arises: What will many of our city churches do if the aid they have been receiving from country churches be cut off? But another question is claiming our interest just now: What will become of many of our country churches if those of the city and town do not come to their rescue?

Much is being thought and said about the problems of the city, but we hear very little of the problems of the country at the present time. A great deal of interest is taken in rescue work, slumming parties, and evangelistic campaigns in the destitute portions of the city, but no one ever thinks of doing a similar work for those country districts where there is little or no religious influence around the people. This condition prevails in many country districts where one would not expect it. Not infrequently do you find communities where once there was a strong flourishing country church, but in the lapse of years conditions have so changed that in many instances there is only once a month preaching, and that during the summer months, or perhaps no religious service at all—not even a Sunday-school. This leads us first to consider :

I. *The problems of rural evangelism.*

(1) *The people have moved and are moving away.* It is thought by many that farm life has little attractions except for the people who have experienced none of it. A great majority of our country people have a longing for the life of the town and city. They dream of the day when they shall be "able to move to town." They think that they have a hard time in the country, but imagine that everything will be smooth sailing in town. They thus come to disdain farm life and magnify the advantages of the village, town, and

city. Soon we see the old home place in possession of tenants and things are going to ruin. This transformation works a hardship on the country church, school, and every interest of the community and even the value of property depreciates, for no one of culture and means cares to move into a vicinity where the bone and sinew of the populace have moved away.

(2) Scanty support is offered to pastors. While it is true that many country churches have lost materially in membership, thus rendering the burden heavier on the few, yet in most cases they could do better if they would only think so. The farmer is prone to look on the sombre side of things and one of his chief assets for despondency is in imagining himself poor. One reason for this, however, is no doubt due to the fact that he handles less money in proportion to his wealth than any other class of business men. Because he does not see all the money he makes he thinks he hasn't it at all and, therefore, gives sparingly. A man worth several thousand dollars will give ten and twenty-five dollars a year to church expenses and think he has done wonders when a wage earner or one on a small salary in a city church would give several times that amount. There is much need for patience and training in stewardship among our country churches.

(3) *The shifting classes* in many sections present a very difficult problem. They are rather

perplexing "to have and to hold" as far as religious training and development are concerned. They do not remain in one place long enough for church people to do them any good. They are shifting and shiftless and like some preachers—never so happy as when "on the move." With an abhorrence of any kind of responsibility it is difficult to make them feel any religious need or duty. Their irresponsiveness and apparent ingratitude are often a bar to effort on the part of the more substantial people. For example, a kind-hearted Christian woman who is solicitous as to the welfare of a certain poor family determines that she will do something for them, and will gather together a respectable "outfit" for the whole family in order that they may go to church. Their new possessions afford an occasion for making a long-cherished visit to their kinspeople in an adjacent neighbourhood the following Sunday. They thus prove a disappointment to their would-be benefactor and the experiment, perhaps, will not be repeated. Yet we must seek to do them good for their sakes and ours, for if they are not helped in some way they are likely to fill our jails with criminals and otherwise menace the community. "For ye have the poor always with you, and whensoever ye will ye can do them good" (Mark xiv. 7).

(4) Closely related to the foregoing problem is that of *social inequality*. The landlord and

the tenant are never socially equal. It cannot be so from the nature of things. The two classes are like water and oil—they can never mix socially. The social reformer who attempts to remedy this condition will likely fail. The love of Jesus will come nearer breaking down the wall of prejudice between the two classes than any other power on earth. A more friendly relationship is possible but social equality is not. Many of the tenant class are substantial, thrifty, reliable people, and in many communities they are fast becoming the landowners. Many of the younger generation are capable of becoming leaders in church work with proper training. But here is one difficulty: the remaining families of the erstwhile aristocracy are inclined to frown down upon those of the tenant class who might be put forward as leaders by the church. This should not be tolerated because, in the first place, it is contrary to the spirit of Jesus; and again, the development of these as leaders is the only hope of many a country church. We need to learn that in the work of the Lord there is neither landlord nor tenant, master nor servant, but all are one in Christ.

(5) *Conservatism* is too frequently a bar to progress of any kind among rural people. They are opposed to "new-fangled" ideas of any sort. Like the ultra-conservatism of Peter, "I never have," serves as a perfectly satisfactory excuse

for not attempting anything new. It is true in their methods of farming and in their methods of church work. Many a farmer is content to hold on to old ways and ideas, making only a scanty support for his family, when by informing himself as to the most profitable crops his particular soil would produce and as to the best methods of cultivation he could easily enrich himself by thousands of dollars per year. It is an exceedingly hopeful sign that in many sections of our country farmers are becoming more aggressive.

Many a country church has died or is in the process of dying simply because the people became married to their old ways of doing things. A brother said that in a certain country Sunday-school the only change he could remember in thirty years was that formerly the children all came forward to receive their Sunday-school papers from the superintendent, whereas more recently the papers were distributed to the classes during the lesson. It is time that our country churches begin to awake from their long night of conservatism and put on the armour of light. Some of them are doing it and a new day has dawned for them. What a power for good in the kingdom of Christ would our country churches become if they were all awake, active, and aggressive! The only type of evangelism known to the New Testament is that which

trains believers for service. This is the kind of evangelism needed in our country churches to-day.

(6) *The annual revival*, or more specifically, *the protracted meeting*, has its good and bad effects upon the life of the country church. It does good in that there is, at least, a temporary quickening of the spiritual life of the people and because a special effort is made to reach the unsaved. These are certainly worthy ends—the highest ends for which a redeemed soul can strive; but the fault lies in the fact that practically all efforts in this direction cease with the revival. The revival serves a good purpose but when it is relied on to do more than it is intended to do it becomes a hindrance. It cannot be made to do the chief service for the community religiously for fifty-two weeks in the year. Too much dependence on the periodic revival has been the bane of many a rural church. We must not cease to have the revival but we must seek to have the revival spirit always present in our regular work. Pastoral leadership in evangelism and a deeper conviction among pastors and people in regard to these things will work a revolution in all our church activities.

2. *Needs in rural evangelism.*

(1) The people need to be taught *new ideals of living*. Farming can be made both profitable and pleasurable but most country people do not

think so. Farming is bound to be profitable for the simple reason that the world must live chiefly from the products of the soil. If farming should cease altogether the world would soon be on its knees begging for bread. The world must be fed and clothed and the farmer must do it. The farmer who lives within his means, is wide awake and aggressive, will make farming pay. Let the farmer be content to stay on the farm and not look longingly towards the city. A contented spirit is half the battle. Let him build to stay and then he is likely to stay. Let him beautify his home and make his improvements substantial. With all our modern inventions it is possible to make a country home as comfortable and delightful as any city home. With the present systems of mail and telephone service, with improved roads, good horses and carriages, and automobiles, and—we dare not scout at the possibilities of the air-ship—with all these and more to come there is no reason why the farm should not be the most delightful of all places to live.

The fact that farming is both profitable and pleasurable may be seen from the present tendency of the wealthy from the cities to move to the country. The prosperous farmer works away with the hope that as soon as he is able he will move to the city and enjoy life ; while the prosperous business man in the city toils away with the hope that some day he will move to the

country and enjoy life. The country man finds it profitable and the city man finds it pleasurable. Now when the farmer has made enough to move to town and live in comfort, if he would turn around and make his home attractive and home-like and would introduce new methods and appliances for the pleasure and profit of his home and farm life he would indeed be a happy and useful man in that community. Let him not only do this for himself but let him take an interest in those things which are for the public good. Let him make it his business to see that the community has good schools and school buildings, good roads and bridges, good church-houses, in fact, in everything that is for his neighbour's good and his own let him take an active interest and support these with his influence and his pocketbook. Let him be public spirited, open minded, large hearted, industrious, contented, and, above all, let him have an unshaken faith in God and a sincere love for his fellow man and the blessings of heaven are vouchsafed unto him.

The cry, "Back to the farm," has not come too soon. Let us hail it joyfully. Let us encourage it by every possible means. "But what has all this to do with rural evangelism?" it may be asked. "Much every way." When the farmer prospers not only is the world benefited commercially but religiously. The giving of the

Gospel to the rural people will mean a great religious awakening for the whole nation, and who shall not say, for the whole world. With a new interest in farm life, with a closer application and a better use of modern inventions which the ever alert mind of man has invented, and with an increased zeal for God among our rural people, surely we may confidently hope for the fulfillment of the prophecy, "The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them: the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose" (Isa. xxxv. 1).

(2) *More well-equipped preachers* should settle as pastors in rural communities. The non-resident pastor with once-a-month preaching will never solve the problem of rural evangelism. It is said by our missionaries in foreign fields that one difficulty they have with native pastors is that they do not want to locate in the country and smaller towns. They seem to esteem it an honour to be pastor in a great city. Thus the rural fields are discriminated against abroad as well as at home. How many of the hundreds and thousands of ministerial students in our colleges and seminaries are now looking towards a country field? They fancy that in the great cities people are all but dying to hear them preach and when they once get there they feel like dying themselves because the people do not want to hear them preach. The city needs the

Gospel, of course, but the country and smaller towns need it too. There is too much crowding towards the cities and the preachers are in the thickest of the jam. A great many of them ought to be there. Thank God for those who are there because God put them there. Many are doing splendid work there because they received their training in more limited fields. Would that more of our younger ministers planned for long pastorates in the country and would not make our country churches simply stepping-stones to what they imagine to be higher places!

The rural communities need educated, thoroughly qualified ministers. Away with the idea that just anybody will do for the country! Some country churches have more college graduates among their membership than have many city churches of the same size. One thing that will stimulate people to desire to remain in the country is permanent pastors who are capable of instructing them in all religious truth and in leading them in every department of church work. Let him live among the people, minister to their needs, and identify himself with their every interest. The country pastorate offers the best opportunity for study.

It is often stated as an objection to living in the country that the schools are inadequate. But if the preacher is what he ought to be and has the

interests of the people at heart he will soon have a school good enough for any boy or girl. After a good many years of observation it is my candid opinion that most of the boys and girls who "go away to school" go too soon. A good school in a community will have a tendency to hold the people together and the preacher is likely to remain longer himself. And if no better arrangement can be made the preacher should himself be qualified to enter the school-room and help to teach. We need all-round preachers in the country. A Methodist church once sent this request to the bishop: "Please send us a preacher that can swim. The last one you sent us got drowned while trying to cross the creek when it was up." Our country churches need preachers who can swim—those who are prepared for every emergency.

(3) Among our own people there is need for *coöperation among country churches*, including those of smaller towns, in locating and supporting pastors. The non-resident pastor is unable to cope with the problems of the country church. There must be a close hand-to-hand struggle with the needs of the rural field before those needs can be supplied. We have not yet learned "the fine art of living together" and working together to the best advantage. Where one church cannot support a pastor for full time two churches ought to be able to work together, for

example, and buy a plot of ground at a convenient distance from the two churches, build a home for the pastor, making it attractive with every comfort that a modern country home could have, then unite in locating a good pastor to serve them. Independence is a fine thing, but coöperation is better. Many of our country churches have gone to seed on church and individual independence. Is it not better to work together and live than to exist separately and die? We need pastors who have the ability and patience to lead their people in such enterprises.

Many pastors could save the day for the country church they are serving, or might be called to serve, if they would but lay themselves out to perform the task. Let no young pastor who contemplates the country pastorate be deceived into thinking that he will be cut short in his development as a preacher or that his powers shall be stunted in their growth if he lives and preaches in the country. If so, let him remember Elijah, Amos, and John the Baptist—these country preachers of the long-ago—at whose word kings were made to tremble on their thrones and by whose force of character the tide of worldliness was turned backward and the affairs of nations were changed. Let no man despise the work he may do or the life of usefulness he may live while serving in a country pastorate.

(4) We must have *better equipped houses of*

worship if we would do better work. The average church building in the country is built with about as much architectural display as is shown in the construction of an ordinary barn—except that the barn is designed for comfort and convenience while the church-house has neither. The great oblong building with a few windows, two flues, two big iron stoves that will blister your face while your feet freeze, a few hard pews, with a platform in one end, is not a house of worship but simply a makeshift. There is absolutely nothing that produces a religious feeling or awakens the sense of worship. “Oh! our religion is spiritual and not dependent on externals!” you say. True, but we are not pleading for pictures and images, and twaddy tinsel. We are pleading for that same taste and care which you manifest in the adornment of your homes and in the choice of your wearing apparel. A church-house is dedicated to the worship of God and it should be at least an expression of our estimate of Him in so far as we are able. It is not so much a question of money as a question of correct ideas that we need. Let us get hold of the right ideas and have the right spirit and the money with which to do these things is likely to come.

The church building should be made to meet all the religious and, in a measure, the social needs of the church and community. It should

have, therefore, not only a comfortable, well-arranged auditorium, but class-rooms for the Sunday-school, and one room at least large enough for prayer-meeting, missionary meetings, young people's meetings, and social gatherings. The very fact that you have these things will be an encouragement to attempt greater things for the Lord. We need new life and new blood in our churches. We must enlist our young people or suffer an irreparable loss. Let us teach our young people that they can be happy in the service of Christ and then perhaps we shall not be so much grieved because of their apparent worldliness. Let us be diligent to show unto them a "more excellent way," and we, as well as they, shall find a blessing.

(5) The country churches must have *help from those of the town and city*. Do the churches of the town and city realize their debt to the country churches? If we compare the amount of good they have received with the amount of good they have done for the country church then we may conclude that they have not realized their debt. A brother writes very beautifully in one of our religious papers about "the problem of the country church," saying that it is "the source from which the town and city churches must expect a large part of their working force"; further, "the country church should not complain on account of the loss of

members who move to the city." But there is not one hint as to the obligation which these city churches bear to the weak country churches. This is characteristic of the attitude of the city church to that of the country. It is as much as to say, "Just keep on sending us your good material. You ought to rejoice that you have given us so much. We do rejoice that we have gotten so much. Now do not complain. Give us all you have and then die, if you haven't anything else to do. Perhaps we can live without you by that time. You have done much *for* us but don't expect anything *from* us."

Of course, our city brethren do not mean to be unjust towards their country neighbours but they are not in full sympathy with our many struggling country churches. The words of Dr. J. W. Porter, editor of *The Western Recorder*, Louisville, have the right ring when he says: "In this restless, rapidly changing age, the country church has a most difficult task. The changes going on in rural life—the moving population to the towns and cities—the transformation of the people, of the business, the manners, the social life of the country—all these things have shaken the very foundations of our country churches and they need the help and sympathy, and prayers of our entire brotherhood." These words come with peculiar force when we remember that their author is pastor

of one of the largest city churches in our Southland. A spirit like this in all our city pastors and church-members would soon bring about a better day for the country church.

It will be well for our churches of the city and town when they come to exercise a little genuine reciprocity with reference to their country neighbours. It is true they have their hands full of tasks already. Some are dealing with the slum problem and are waging an almost hopeless warfare against ignorance, dirt, and sin; "this they ought to have done and not to have left the other undone." But you may rub, scrub, teach, and praise a "Dago" and he is a "Dago" still. He moves, mentally and physically, in a very small world. He is not able to think beyond a few quick bargains and as many shining dimes. Of course, he has a soul and needs a Saviour and we ought to try to reach and help him. But what of the poor boy in the country? He has a healthy body, a clear brain, an alert mind, and a soul that is hungering and thirsting for higher things. He wants to be something and looks with longing eyes upon a world of possibility before him. Will you not go out and hunt him up and do something for him? He will one day rise up and call you blessed.

(6) An excellent way to do effective evangelistic work in rural churches is to hold *simultaneous revivals*. This affords an excellent oppor-

tunity for coöperation between churches of the city and towns with those of the country. Why not include country churches in our simultaneous evangelistic campaigns? Or we might inaugurate such campaigns wholly within the country, holding services in the churches, schoolhouses and homes of the people. Our country churches should be recognized, encouraged, and assisted in work of this kind. But when town and city people go to aid country people in religious work they must first allay all suspicion that they are coming simply for selfish ends. I have known of cases where pastors and their people were very attentive to certain members of country churches, but such attentions do not usually result in any good to the country church—rather a transfer of membership from the country church to one in the city or town as the case may be.

Let the town and city people prove their interest in their country neighbours first by making some sacrifice in their behalf. They can do much to arouse their latent energies. They can help them to have a more attractive place of worship; they can pay a part of the pastor's salary in order that they have services oftener or perhaps secure a more efficient pastor; they can go out and aid them in person in their Sunday-schools and evangelistic services; but they should not go in the spirit of condescension. Let them

take off their kid gloves, silk hats, and city manners, and come down to a common level with the people if they would win their confidence and do them good. Interest in their welfare must be real and if there be any sham they are quick to detect it. There is a great work to be done in these rural districts and the Christian people of the city and town can be of great assistance if they will only awake to their duty. "Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields, that they are white already unto harvest" (John iv. 35).

3. *Advantages in rural evangelism.*

(1) Country people, as a rule, *appreciate the Gospel*. One of the traditional sayings of Dr. J. A. Broadus is: "When you go to the city take your best coat. When you go to the country take your best sermon." The saying is not without significance and the country people are complimented by the statement. They like to hear the Gospel in its purity—unalloyed with worldly wisdom and pedantic display. They care nothing about the new-fangled theological notions of the present day. It is a matter of little concern with them as to what constitutes the priestly code of the Pentateuch; as to whether Isaiah were twins; or as to whether the whale swallowed Jonah; this they do know: the Word of God as it is meets the utmost need of the soul and that is sufficient. Nowhere in all the world will the Gospel of Jesus Christ meet a more hearty re-

sponse than among rural people. Therefore, they should have more preaching and better preaching.

(2) *Normal evangelism will have its weight in rural communities.* For the most part, they know nothing of the sensationalism and professionalism such as is known in cities and larger towns. The country has not been invaded by the professional evangelist of the questionable kind. There he cannot stir up excitement, draw big crowds, and gather large collections. There the people have too much sense to be tricked by clap-trap methods. There they are usually satisfied with an earnest presentation of the gospel message with reliance upon the Holy Spirit to perform the work of regeneration. The Methodist bishop who advised every boy to be born in the country might have been a little more practical had he advised every young preacher to begin his labours in the country. There he will have a sympathetic hearing. There will he find a hospitality which will refresh his spirit. There he will escape the pruning knife of criticism which so often cuts away individuality. There he will have a freedom of utterance so essential to the success of every preacher of the Gospel. There he is most likely to reap a harvest of precious souls. Let the young preacher covet the privilege of preaching a great deal in the country. He will not only do great good there but he will

receive great good. No minister can have a well-rounded experience until he has served as pastor of a country church.

(3) The *results* of rural evangelism are *lasting*. The people never forget a good meeting or a good sermon. You can hold a few days' meeting in a country church and then go back years afterwards and find some fruits of it. Often it is that great "revivals" are held in cities where a few months afterwards scarcely any trace of it can be found. Such is not the case with revivals in the country. Of course, much of this is due to the fact that the people are more permanently located—at least in some country districts. Even with the many changes going on there are some who remain. This gives a permanency to the work which is not the case with many town and city fields. This is true especially where pastors are located in the country. The lasting results of rural evangelism are shown from the fact that most of our preachers were brought up under the influence of the country Sunday-school and church and were converted to the Lord there. This is true of many others who have been and are now indispensable in Christian service.

The rural communities are calling to us for aid from every quarter. Some are calling by their ignorance, sin, and lawlessness; some by their struggling efforts to keep the work going; some

by their destitution and neglect. One of the most pathetic scenes that meets one's vision anywhere is to witness an old time-honoured church-house about whose door and within whose walls throngs of people once gathered to worship God but now they stand only a mute monument as to what they have been. The doors are rarely open for religious services and the community is suffering from spiritual dearth. Who will go and "build the old waste places"? Will not many rise up and say, "Here am I; send me"? Through you may be realized the promise of the Lord, "For the Lord shall comfort Zion: He will comfort all her waste places; and He will make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the garden of the Lord; joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving, and the voice of melody" (Isa. li. 3).

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